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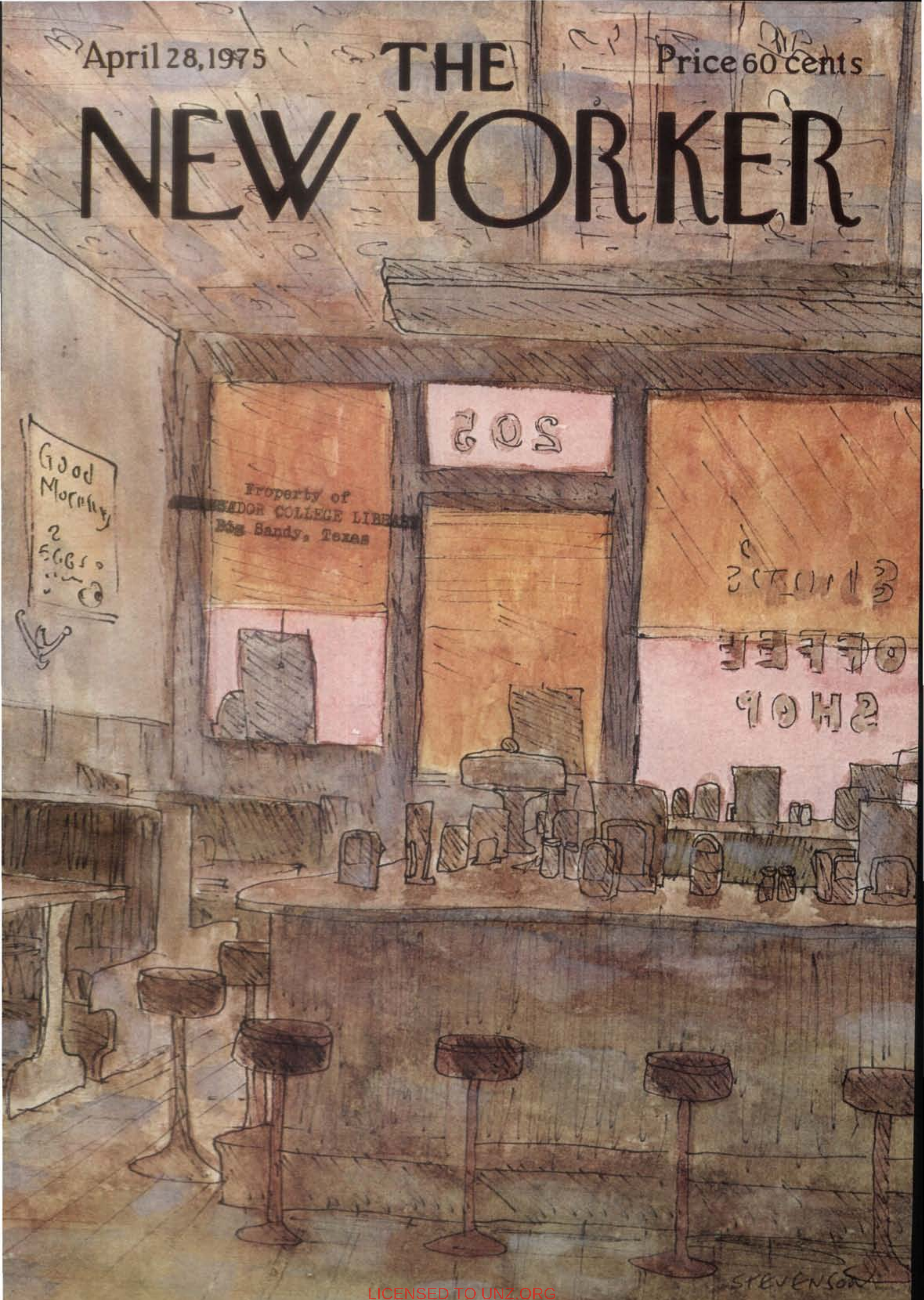
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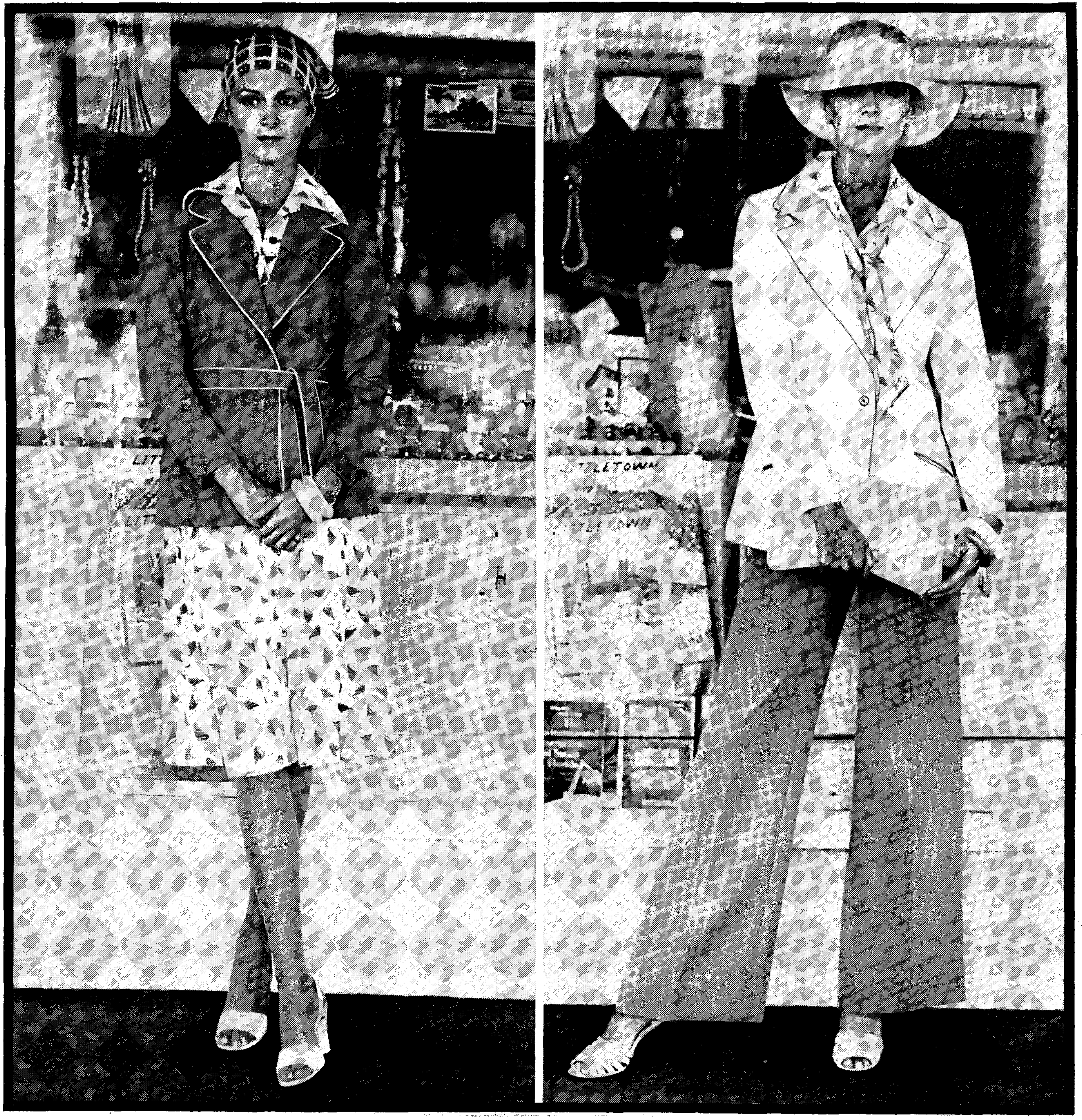

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

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THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Absurd Person Singular—A marvellous small comedy by the English playwright Alan Ayckbourn, mostly about the horrors of marriage, though you scarcely notice. With Fritz Weaver, Sandy Dennis, Larry Blyden, Geraldine Page, Tony Roberts, and Carole Shelley. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 246-4636. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Action—A play by Sam Shepard, together with his "Killer's Head," a short monologue. Season subscribers only. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 247-0393. Mondays at 6:15; Tuesdays through Thursdays at 7:30; and Fridays and Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2. Closes Saturday, May 3.)

Alice in Wonderland—A two-week return engagement of André Gregory's startling and outrageous production, with no Freudian implication overlooked, and with many references to drugs. The Caterpillar scene is very funny, and the Mad Tea Party is truly mad. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Nightly at 7:30. Closes Saturday, April 26.)

All God's Chillun Got Wings—A conscientious revival of an old O'Neill play, directed by George C. Scott and starring Trish Van Devere and Robert Christian. (Circle in the Square, Broadway at 50th St. 581-0720. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

All Over Town—A carelessly carpentered farce by Murray Schisgal. Direction by Dustin Hoffman. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 246-5969. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Bette Midler's Clams on the Half Shell Revue—A revue starring the formidable and often very funny Bette Midler, assisted by Lionel Hampton and other gifted folk. (Minskoff Theatre, 45th St. west of Broadway. 869-0550. Mondays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10:30.)

The Constant Wife—Somerset Maugham's fifty-year-old comedy serves as a vehicle for Ingrid Bergman, who does her best to keep it from creaking. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 246-5990. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2. Closes Saturday, May 10.)

Dance with Me—A comedy with music, written by Greg Antonacci, who also plays the lead. A pleasant account of the daydreams of a young man of Manhattan, well acted by the gifted La Mama Plexus Company. (Mayfair, 235 W. 46th St. 391-0063. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 2 and 5.)

Diamond Studs—A country-and-Western version of a life of Jesse James; the life doesn't bear close examination but is great fun to listen to. In a cabaret setting. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8; Fridays and Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Equus—Peter Shaffer's continuously exciting dance of exploration through the mind of a boy who loves horses, worships the quality of "horseness," and commits a dreadful crime in the name of that worship. With Anthony Hopkins, Peter Firth, Frances Sternhagen, Marian Seldes, Roberta Maxwell, and Michael Higgins. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 246-9156. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

The First Breeze of Summer—The Negro Ensemble Company has opened its season with a wonderful production of Leslie Lee's interesting play about a crucial weekend in the lives of a fairly prosperous black family. Under Douglas Turner Ward's masterly direction, all the acting is good, and that of Frances Foster, Moses Gunn, a young man called Reyno, and Mr. W. himself especially so. (St. Marks Playhouse, 133 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. OR 4-3530. Wednesday through Friday at 8; Saturday at 8:30; and Sunday at 7. Matinées Saturday at 3:30 and Sunday at 2:30. Closes Sunday, April 27.)

Ghosts and **The Measures Taken**—The Ibsen play, translated by Rolf Fjelde: Wednesdays through Fridays at 7:30. . . . ¶ The Brecht play, translated by Eric Bentley: Saturdays at 7:30 and 9:30, and Sundays at 7:30. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350.)

Goodtime Charley—Joel Grey and Ann Reinking struggle valiantly but in vain to save this failed musical. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

In Praise of Love—A sentimental comedy by Terence Rattigan, worth going to see for Rex Harrison, Julie Harris, Martin Gabel, and a set by Jo Mielziner. (Morosco, 215 W. 45th St. 246-6230. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

James Joyce's Dubliners—A play by J. W. Riordan, taken from Joyce's early writings and Stanislaus Joyce's biography, "My Brother's Keeper." (Roundabout Stage One, 333 W. 23rd St. 924-7160. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2. Closes Saturday, May 3.)

A Matter of Time—A musical with a book by Hap Schlein and Russell Leib, music and lyrics by Philip F. Margo, and a cast headed by Joe Masiell and Glory Van Scott. Directed by Tod Jackson. Previews through Saturday, April 26. Opens officially on Sunday, April 27, at 7. (Playhouse, 357 W. 48th St. 541-9820. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Misanthrope—Molière survives a considerable buffeting at the hands of a production laid in the de Gaulle era. The stars are Alec McCowen and Diana Rigg. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 695-5858. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Philemon—A tenderhearted, overlong musical about a clown in Antioch, some two thousand years ago. By Tom Jones and Harvey

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Schmidt, who wrote "The Fantasticks." (Portfolio Studio, 341 W. 47th St. 246-6755. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Private Lives—A rollicking revival of Noël Coward's dazzling gloss on the old saying "The course of true love never did run smooth." With Maggie Smith and John Standing, directed by John Gielgud. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-4271. Nightly at 8. Matinées Wednesday and Saturday at 2. Closes Saturday, April 26.)

The Ritz—A very funny vaudeville about life in a homosexual bathhouse. Written by Terrence McNally, and starring Jack Weston, Rita Moreno, and Jerry Stiller. (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 246-5639. Nightly, except Sundays and Thursdays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Same Time, Next Year—A comedy as neatly put together as a Cartier watch and with scarcely more heart. Ellen Burstyn and Charles Grodin are the cast, and they are wonderful. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 245-3430. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

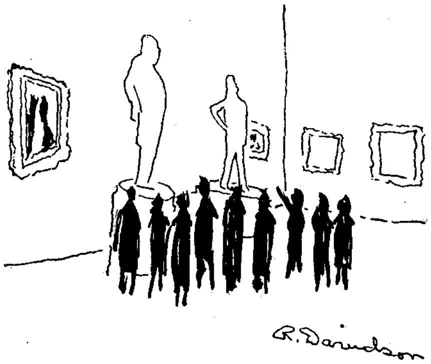
Shenandoah—A musical about the Civil War, but really about showbiz. Wonderfully sung by John Cullum. (Alvin, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Sherlock Holmes—The great detective is played by Patrick Horgan, and Clive Revill is his implacable adversary, Professor Moriarty. Frank Dunlop directed this amusing revival of the William Gillette classic. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 246-6699. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Sizwe Banzi Is Dead and **The Island**—John Kani and Winston Ntshona in two South African plays imported from London. Devised by Athol Fugard (who also directed) and by the Messrs. Kani and Ntshona. **SIZWE BANZI IS DEAD,** a blistering indictment of the inhuman treatment of blacks in South Africa. Tuesdays and Thursdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3. . . . ¶ In **THE ISLAND,** two black prisoners of the South African state outwit torture and death by means of brotherly affection and invincible courage. Wednesdays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 5:30. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 757-7164.)

The Wiz—A black musical version of that well-remembered movie "The Wizard of Oz." The stars of the occasion are Tom H. John, who did the sets, and Geoffrey Holder, who did the costumes and also directed the show. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 246-0730. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—**CANDIDE:** Harold Prince has turned the Bernstein-Wilbur musical of 1956 into a child's game that any number can play. The cast is young, merry, and companionable as it lopes around and through the audience. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 247-7992. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 6,241 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **GODSPELL:** A musical adaptation of the book of Matthew, and once a numbing prologue is over, it becomes a joyful celebration of theatre itself. Songs by Stephen Schwartz. (Promenade, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. 799-7690. Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 7:30, and Saturdays at 6 and 9. Matinées Wednesdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **GREASE:** A musical (score, book, and lyrics by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey) that parodies, by faithful imitation, the songs and dances of the nineteen-fifties. The young cast performs capably and with spirit. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 245-5760. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE HOT L BALTIMORE:** Lanford Wilson's play about the assorted seedy residents of a once good hotel, now shabby and threatened by bulldozers, is synthetic and sugary, but it is quite entertaining, too. (Circle in the Square, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 9; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE MAGIC SHOW:** A wretched musical, but the magic tricks by Doug Henning make up for it all. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 489-6392. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **PIPPIN:** A great big gorgeous show, built upon a tiny and trivial book. The chief miracle worker is the director and choreographer Bob Fosse. With Samuel E. Wright, Michael Rupert, Eric Berry, and Patti Karr. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 265-2412. Nightly, except Sundays, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **RAISIN:** A musical distinguished for the intrepidity of the director and choreographer, Donald McKayle. The book is based on Lorraine Hansberry's "A Raisin in the Sun," which shows its years, but the large cast is superlative. (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 586-5555. Wednesdays through Fridays at 7:30; Saturdays at 8; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)



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MISCELLANY

The Circus—Where else can you see an elephant stand on its head? (Madison Square Garden, Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts. 564-4400. Tuesdays at 10 and 2:30; Wednesdays through Fridays at 1:30 and 7:30; Saturdays at 10:30, 3, and 8; and Sundays at 1:15 and 5:30. Closes Monday, May 26.)

BALLET AND DANCE

New York City Ballet—Opening performances (tentative schedule) of an engagement that will run through Sunday, June 29—Tuesday evening, April 29: "Donizetti Variations," "Dybbuk Variations," and "Cortège Hongrois." . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, April 30: "Raymonda Variations," "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," "Ivesiana," and "Stars and Stripes." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, May 1: "Donizetti Variations," "Dybbuk Variations," and "Firebird." . . . ¶ Friday evening, May 2: "Swan Lake," "Dances at a Gathering," and "Stars and Stripes." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, May 3: "Swan Lake," "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," and "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, May 3: "Irish Fantasy," "Scherzo Fantastique," "Pas de Deux," "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," and "Cortège Hongrois." (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. TR 7-4727. Evenings at 8. Matinées at 2.)

Bolshoi Ballet—"Spartacus": Wednesday evening, April 23; Friday evening, April 25; Saturday evening, April 26; Wednesday evening, April 30; and Friday evening, May 2. . . . ¶ "Giselle": Thursday evening, April 24 (American première of a full-length version); Saturday matinée, April 26; Monday evening, April 28; and Wednesday matinée, April 30. . . . ¶ "Ivan the Terrible": Tuesday evening, April 29 (American première); Thursday evening, May 1; and Saturday matinée, May 3. . . . ¶ "Swan Lake": Saturday evening, May 3 (American première of a full-length version). (Metropolitan Opera House. 787-3880. Evenings at 8. Matinées at 2. Through Saturday, May 24.)

Alvin Ailey City Center Dance Theatre—Wednesday evening, April 23, and Friday evening, April 25: "Blues Suite," "Love Songs," "Rainbow 'Round My Shoulder," and "Revelations." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, April 24: "Night Creature," "Portrait of Billie," "Feast of Ashes," and "Hidden Rites." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, April 26: "Blues Suite," "The Road of the Phoebe Snow," and "Revelations." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, April 26: "Night Creature," "Portrait of Billie," "Feast of Ashes," and "Revelations." . . . ¶ Sunday matinée, April 27: "Hidden Rites," "A Song for You," "The Mooche," and "The Road of the Phoebe Snow." . . . ¶ Sunday evening, April 27: "Blues Suite," "Cry," "The Mooche," and "Revelations." . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, April 29; Thursday evening, May 1; and Saturday evening, May 3: "The Road of the Phoebe Snow," "Cry," and "Carmina Burana." . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, April 30; Friday evening, May 2; and Saturday matinée, May 3: "Night Creature," "After Eden," "Rainbow 'Round My Shoulder," and "Revelations." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Evenings at 7:30. Matinées at 2. Closes Sunday, May 4.)

Dance Theatre of Harlem—Wednesday and Thursday evenings, April 23-24; Saturday evening, April 26; and Sunday matinée, April 27: "Holberg Suite," "Don Quixote Pas de Deux" (company première), "Agon," and "Dougla." . . . ¶ Friday evening, April 25; Saturday matinée, April 26; and Sunday evening, April 27: "Design for Strings," "Every Now and Then" (première), "Bugaku" (company première), and "Forces of Rhythm." . . . ¶ Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, April 29-30, and Saturday matinée, May 3: "Concerto Barocco," "Le Corsaire," "After Corinth" (première), and "Fête Noire." . . . ¶ Thursday through Saturday evenings, May 1-3: "Allegro Brillante" (company première), "Fontessa" (New York première), "Afternoon of a Faun," and "Rhythmetron." (Uris Theatre, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2. Closes Sunday, May 11.)

Juilliard Dance Ensemble—A program of new works by Anna Sokolow, Kazuko Hirabayashi, and José Limón (a work reconstructed and completed by Daniel Lewis), performed by students of the Juilliard dance department, with the Juilliard Chamber Ensemble conducted by Teo Macero. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Saturday, April 26, at 8; Sunday, April 27, at 3; and Monday, April 28, at 8. For tickets, call 799-5000, Ext. 235.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town.)

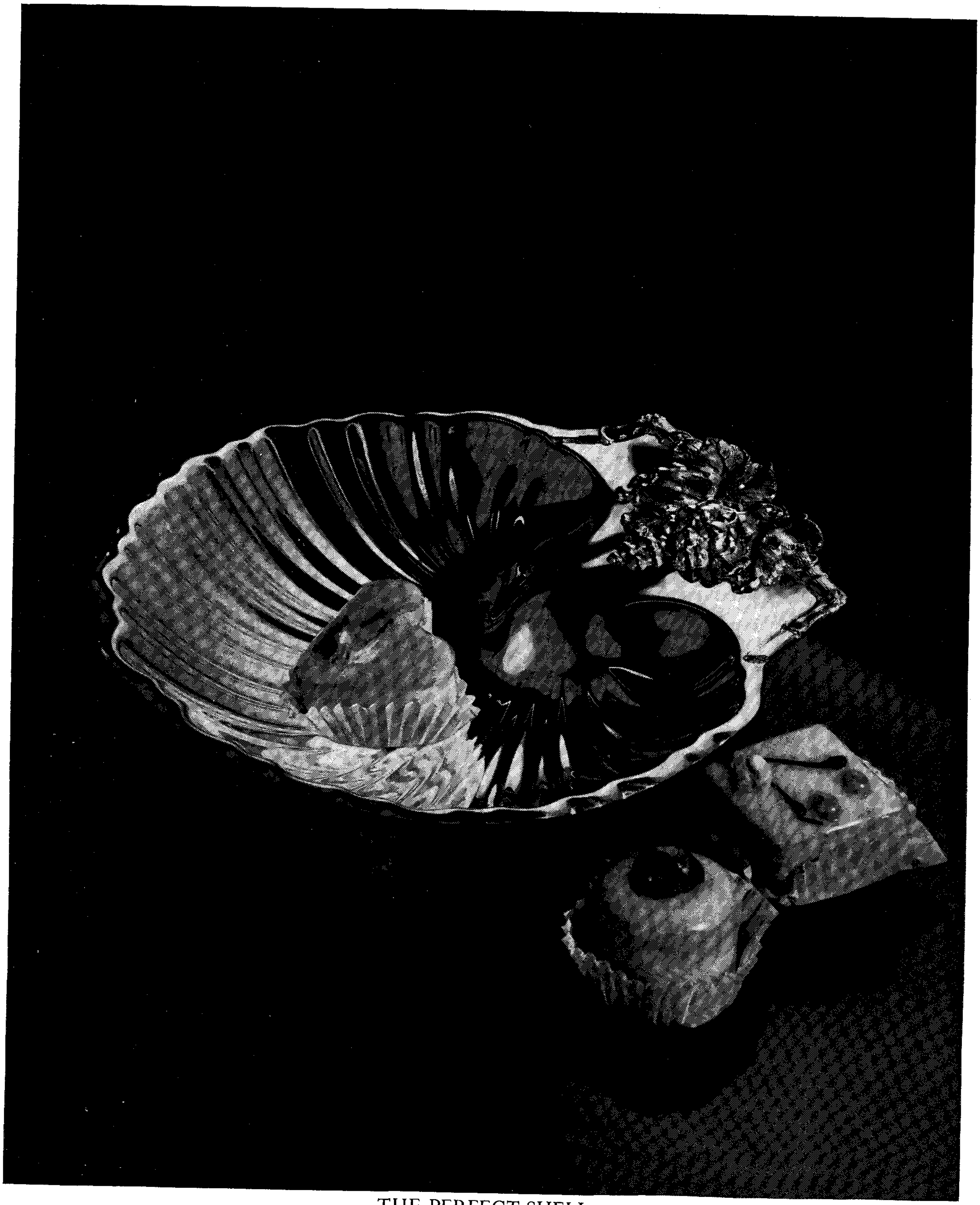
MOSTLY FOR MUSIC

Angry Squire, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—Saxophonist Tommy Jones leads a trio on Fridays and Saturdays in these excessively nautical surroundings. Music from nine-thirty to two-thirty. Dinner.

Arthur's Tavern, 57 Grove St. (CH 2-9468)—The Monday-night home for five or six part-time Dixieland musicians—known very locally as the Grove Street Stompers. After they've put eight nonmusical hours into other pursuits (such as earning a living), these energetic traditionalists set about resuscitating "Buddy Bolden's Blues," "Jubilee," "Fidgety Feet," and the like; from nine-fifteen to one. The rest of the week, singer and pianist Mabel Godwin is at her post from nine to three, flanked on three sides by a makeshift bar. Closed Sundays.

Boomer's, 340 Bleecker St., at Christopher St. (243-0245)—Charles McPherson, a lyrical and heavily bop-influenced alto saxophonist, pilots a quintet through Saturday, April 26. On Wednesday, April 30, tenor player George Coleman and trumpeter Danny Moore begin sharing the bandstand. The action commences at nine-forty-five. Dinner. Closed Sundays.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A large-scale rock-and-rollerie patronized by youthful throngs decked out in



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jeans, plaid flannel shirts, slogan-ridden T-shirts, and turquoise jewelry. Proctor and Bergman, the performing remains of the Firesign Theatre, wind up their stint opposite folk-rocker Tom Waits on Wednesday, April 23. Thursday through Sunday, April 24-27, jazz guitarist Pat Martino trades sets with electronic-jazz-rock saxophonist and Miles Davis-alumnus Dave Liebman and his band, Lookout Farm. Tom Scott, who, in his mid-twenties, is already a successful composer (for television and movies), arranger, studio musician, and jazz consultant to the stars—such as Carole King, Ringo Starr, and Barbra Streisand—performs with his band, the L. A. Express, Tuesday through Thursday, April 29-May 1. On Friday, May 2, sixties-pop writer and singer Neil Sedaka arrives, along with comic Mike Preminger. Shows at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dinner.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl. (228-6440)—Pianist Bernie Leighton operates in this lively little bar from nine-thirty to two-thirty through Saturday, April 26. On Sundays, from nine-thirty to one, **JAKI BYARD**, who displays a confident feel for ragtime, stride, and more modern piano styles, has fun with bassist Major Holley, who sometimes sings along in a voice as deep as his instrument. Dinner.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (RH 4-1600)—Singer and pianist **BOBBY SHORT**, the prized fixture of the Café Carlyle, vigorously pays his respects to Gershwin, Porter, and others. Helping out, as always, are bassist Beverly Peer and drummer Dick Sheridan. Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-forty-five, eleven-thirty, and one. Dinner and supper. . . . ¶ Muriel Roberts, an industrious and swinging pianist, has taken over in the Bemelmans Bar, which appears to have become a permanent music room. Mondays through Thursdays from nine to twelve-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays from nine to one.

C.B.G.B., 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—A mid-sixties-seedy, neo-Bowery bar and the only place (through Sunday, April 27) to see **PATTI SMITH**. Miss Smith, a poet, singer, actress, and composer, comes on as a female incarnation of Dylan, Lou Reed, and rock and roll in general. Her material—which is all rather gutsy—ranges from a poem about Wilhelm Reich's son riding around in a UFO to a seething, strung-out, bisexual interpretation of "Gloria," a decade-old rock standard. She is backed by a capable crew—pianist Richard Sohl, guitarist Lenny Kaye, and bassist Ivan Kral. A back-to-simplicity rock band called Television (Reruns would be just as apt a name) opens the show with old-fashioned, unaffected sixties tunes. Music from about ten-thirty.

Cookery, 21 University Pl., at 8th St. (OR 4-4450)—**DICK WELLSTOOD**, a subtle and inventive pianist, reproduces the raw materials—the emotions, the rhythmic patterns, the harmonic strengths—that the old-master pianists of the thirties and forties quarried their styles out of. He is playing by himself, which is as it should be; bass players simply bounce off his left hand. From eight until one every night except Sunday, when Dick Hyman takes over. Dining.

Eddie Condon's, 144 W. 54th St. (265-8277)—The third version, and an attractive one. The house band is made up of Ed Polcer, Vic Dickenson, Herbie Hall, Jim Andrews, Red Balaban (a bassist and the owner of the club), and Cliff Leeman. On Tuesday, April 29, tenorman **ILLINOIS JACQUET** sits in with the regulars. Music from nine to three-thirty. Dill Jones plays a versatile and often rollicking piano nightly from five to nine. Closed Sundays.

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Five Spot, 2 St. Marks Pl., just east of Third Ave. (730-9270)—In the nature of things, it is the business of an avant-garde to become old hat, to turn newness into orthodoxy, orthodoxy into bone. Such has been the case with the pianist **CECIL TAYLOR**, a revolutionary who came forward almost twenty years ago and who, after a five-year absence from New York clubs, has just settled into the Five Spot. His solos are longer—fifteen, twenty, twenty-five minutes are customary—and lately he has taken to chanting fore and aft of them. But those are the only differences. Each solo is still a prodigious staminal display. For all the hour and a quarter that one of his pieces sometimes lasts when he has sidemen with him, he frenzies the keyboard, forcing from it a virtually endless flow of staccato chords, agitato single notes, electric clusters, jackhammer arpeggios, and ripping glisses. It is a never-silent, jointless, rushing music that goes by so fast each new note spills back on the preceding one. For a long time, no one paid much attention to Taylor. He was a freak who played the way Bartók-Stravinsky-Hindemith-Debussy would have played had they been jazz musicians. But such masters often need apostles to prepare their way, and that is what the pianists McCoy Tyner and Keith Jarrett have—knowingly or not—been doing during the past several years with *their* forty-minute solo forays. During these preparations, Taylor has been away at Antioch and the University of Wisconsin, and his return on opening night was greeted in messiah fashion. The house was haunch-to-haunch, and worshipful to the point of catatonia. Taylor has two old sidekicks with him—Jimmy Lyons on alto saxophone and Andrew Cyrille on drums. Lyons is an eclectic: heads keep popping up in his immense solos, and they belong to Charlie Parker and John Coltrane and Ornette Coleman. And Cyrille, who plays too loud, nonetheless moves along with Taylor the way a cat walks with its master—roughly parallel. Once in a while on opening night Taylor's waters sloshed far enough to one side to reveal his roots, and there were Ellington and Willie the Lion and Gershwin and Monk. That was a nice sight. Tuesdays through Sundays from around ten. . . . ¶ On Mondays: **DAVE MATTHEWS'** twelve-piece band, made up of studio musicians who range from their twenties to their forties. Music from nine-thirty to two. . . . ¶ On Sundays from five to nine: the Music Complex Jazz Orchestra, also made up of studio musicians. Like the old territorial bands it resembles, it doesn't always get the right sound in the right place, but it has enthusiasm and several impressive soloists. The pianist **JAKI BYARD** acts as the leader. Chinese and American food.

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Gregory's, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—Alto saxophonist **LEE KONITZ**, who worked out his apprenticeship with two different megaliths—the pianist Lennie Tristano and the bandleader Stan Kenton—and since then has gone his original, catch-me-if-you-can way, is here Mondays and Tuesdays with bassist John Beal and pianist Dick Katz. His playing has not diminished. Wednesdays through Sundays, from nine-thirty to three, Gregory's balloons with the Odd Trio—pianist **BROOKS KERR**, who at twenty-three knows more Ellington tunes than Himself ever did, and two Ellington alumni: reedman **RUSSELL PROCOPE** and drummer **SONNY GREER**. The trio is not to be missed. Warren Chiasson, a Canadian vibraharpist, has good flashes from six to nine except Sundays, when **AL HAIG**, one of the first and best bop pianists, performs with Sam Brown, an interesting guitar soloist, and bassist Jemil Nasser from four-thirty to nine-thirty. Snacks.

Jacques at the Village Corner, 142 Bleecker St., at LaGuardia Pl. (473-9762)—A warm, cheering, aging corner bar where people drink, eat popcorn, throw darts, and listen to the fastidious piano musings of Lance Hayward. He is present every night but Wednesday, when Jim Roberts fills in. Singer Jane Valentine contributes vocals every Sunday. The hours run from nine-thirty to three.

Jimmy Ryan's, 154 W. 54th St. (CO 5-9505)—**ROY ELDRIDGE** is sixty-four, his hair is whitish, and he wears thick glasses, but the old drive is still there, even if it doesn't generally appear until midnight. His accompanists—Dick Katz or Cyril Haynes on piano, Eddie Locke on drums, Major Holley on bass, Joe Muranyi on reeds, and Bobby Pratt on trombone—provide camouflage for Eldridge during the early part of the evening and ballast during the later part. Music from nine-thirty to three. On Sundays, Max Kaminsky is in charge of a group of musical archivists from eight until two.

Mabel Mercer Room, in the St. Regis-Sheraton, Fifth Ave. at 55th St. (PL 3-4500)—A portrait of the artist at seventy-five, which **MABEL MERCER** has just gracefully turned. Everything is just right—the voice (despite its early-evening ups and downs), the phrasing, the wonderful songs, her regal good looks, and the newly christened room itself. Jimmy Lyon's accompaniment is calm and fatherly. She sings—and miraculously well of late, particularly at her second show—at ten and midnight, Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Pianist and composer Matt Dennis, who is responsible for "Angel Eyes," "Let's Get Away from It All," "Will You Still Be Mine?," and other standards, works with drummer Bob Rosengarden, bassist Milt Hinton, and vocalist Ginny Dennis. Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine-fifteen to one. On Mondays, from nine-thirty to midnight, Woody Allen comes and goes, talking of Lorenzo Tio. Closed Sundays.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—An upper West Side restaurant with an enclosed sidewalk gallery and a generally relaxed atmosphere. Bassist Gordon Edwards takes a capable quintet through some refined, unadulterated rhythm and blues nightly, from ten to three.

Music Room, 2871 Broadway, at 111th St. (866-2018)—A pleasant student refuge and classical musicians' hangout. Most of the young professionals who perform here as soloists or in chamber groups normally play with the city's large orchestras; these quarters serve as a unique showcase for their individual skills. Solo performers dominate Mondays through Thursdays and Sundays, while Fridays and Saturdays are given over to chamber ensembles, which comprise strings, piano, flute, or bassoon, in varying proportions. A basket for contributions is at the front of the dining area. The hours for live music run from seven to eleven.

Reno Sweeney, 126 W. 13th St. (691-0900)—**ODETTA**, a woman of many powers and many musical styles—she's lately been branching out from a strict regimen of blues and folk songs (which she had adhered to for over twenty years) to include some rock, soul, and Nashville-inspired ditties—tops the bill here Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine and midnight. On Sundays at nine and eleven, Eric Bentley—Brecht scholar, academician, dramatist, and recording artist (he has made six albums of songs)—sings and plays piano and harmonium. When Bentley introduces a song or explains the harmonium, it's almost like sitting in on one of his lectures, but he is a charming, if tentative and somewhat absent-minded-professorial, performer. Mondays are showcases for new talent. Dining.

St. James Infirmary, 22 Seventh Ave. S., at Leroy St. (675-1343)—A small, triangular club that occupies the cellar of a tiny white-brick building south of Sheridan Square. Tenor saxophonist **AL COHN** plays with pianist Hod O'Brian, bassist Cameron Brown, and drummer Beaver Harris through Sunday, April 27. Beginning Wednesday, April 30, **CHET BAKER** returns to sit in with O'Brian, Brown, and Harris. Mondays have been claimed by Joe Lee Wilson, who sings in front of a combo led by saxophonist Monty Waters. Music from ten to three. Closed Tuesdays.

Stryker's, 103 W. 86th St., at Columbus Ave. (874-8754)—An unobtrusive entrance makes it easy to overlook this pleasant upper West Side room of simple design. Trumpeter **CHET BAKER** works with and inspires a relaxed, smooth, neo-fifties ensemble on Mondays and Tuesdays. On Wednesday and Thursday, April 23-24, Don Elliot's quartet is in charge; on Friday and Saturday, April 25-26, vibraharpist Roy Pennington brings in a quartet; and on the following Friday and Saturday (May 2-3), Peter La Barbera, whose vibraharp sounds alternately bluesy and medieval, heads a trio. **CHUCK WAYNE** and **JOE PUMA** exchange some lyrically exciting guitar solos on Sundays. Music Mondays through Thursdays from nine-thirty to two; Fridays and Saturdays from nine-thirty to three; and Sundays from nine to two. Snacks.

Studio 77 / Ali's Alley, 77 Greene St., between Spring and Broome Sts. (226-9042)—Heavyweight, unrestrained music in a modest, spartan ground-floor SoHo loft. The musicians—drummer **RASHIED ALI**, James Vass on alto and soprano saxophone and flute, David Durrah on piano, and bassist Benny Wilson—play intense sets, each soloing for fifteen minutes and longer. Thursdays through Sundays from ten to three. Soul food and soft drinks.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—This restaurant, only a few months old, started out as an agreeable, unusually spacious and subdued listening room, but has grown more and more congested and frenetic—perhaps it is coming of age as a New York night club. On Wednesday and Thursday, April 23-24, pianist Fred Thaler works with bassist John Miller from nine to one. More piano-bass duos follow: Mike Abene and Mike Moore play from ten to two on Friday and Saturday, April 25-26; Rosalinda and her bass player, George Mraz, arrive at nine on Wednesday and Thursday, April 30-May 1; and on Sundays Nina Sheldon is assisted by Mike Moore from eight to midnight. John Abercrombie, a fine young guitarist, performs with Andy LaVerne, on piano, Friday and Saturday, May 2-3, from ten to two.

Tin Palace, 325 Bowery, at 2nd St. (674-0566)—A pleasant-looking, relaxed, and hassle-free bar and restaurant, with the obligatory exposed-brick walls, tin ceiling, and resident dog—in this case, a black shepherd named Tanya. On Sundays, a mainstream quartet works out under the guidance of Anatol Gerasimov, a young Russian saxophonist who, to judge by what was played on a recent evening, was weaned on the likes of Coltrane's "My Favorite Things" rather than "Otchi Tchornyia." Tuesdays through Thursdays are allotted to trumpeter Greg Bobulinski's quartet, along with vocalist Mel Dancy. Flutist Lloyd McNeil fronts an excellent combo—Cecil McBee on bass, electric pianist Dom Salvador, and drummer Buddy Williams—that concentrates on infectiously rhythmic Brazilian-inspired jazz on Fridays and Saturdays.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (989-9011)—A reliable forty-year-old institution. **BILLY HARPER**, a high-energy tenor saxophonist (and one of the brightest players with the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis band), works with bassist Herb Bushler, pianist Harold Mabern, trumpeter Virgil Jones, and guitarist Ted Dunbar through Sunday, April 27. On Tuesday, April 29, drummer **TONY WILLIAMS** temporarily forsakes his inclinations toward rock and begins performing with pianist **HANK JONES** and bassist **RON CARTER**. On Mondays, the **THAD JONES-MEL LEWIS** band assembles itself on the acutely angled bandstand and lets go with some rousing, hard-hitting material, as well as a number of less successful ballads. Music from ten.

West Boondock, 114 Tenth Ave., at 17th St. (924-9723)—Closer to the docks than to the boonies, this dark, sawdusted café is still cashing in on the late-sixties soul-food bonanza. The music—piano-bass duets, for the most part—is considerably more citified. Steve Elmer and a bassist play Mondays through Wednesdays; Nat Jones and his bassist are here Thursdays through Sundays. Music from eight.

West End Café, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—The old hangout for beatniks and Columbia students is now a bricked-and-boarded cafeteria and music room. Mondays and Tuesdays have been set aside for a swing group that includes trumpeter Franc Williams, trombonist and guitarist Eddie Durham, pianist Ram Ramirez, and drummer Shelton Gary. Four-string tenor guitarist **TINY GRIMES**, once an important component of the Art Tatum trio, now heads his own bluesy, bebopping threesome on Wednesdays and Thursdays, with Shelton Gary, and with Brian Torff on bass. Fridays and Saturdays, a bop quintet takes the stand, and the Mabel Godwin quartet stops by on Sundays. Music from nine to one. Dinner.

BIG DEALS

(Dinner and supper, music, and all that.)

Pierre, Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (838-8000)—On Monday, April 28, the Café comes to life again, with Steven Weltner's piano recitals from five-thirty to eleven-thirty. He will be succeeded, on Thursday, May 1, by pianist-singer Tony Gorody, whose hours will be eight-thirty to twelve-thirty.

Plaza, Fifth Ave. at 59th St. (PL 9-3000)—The Persian Room is offering the song-and-dance team of Robert Kole and Ernest Parham at ten during the week, and at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty on Friday and Saturday. The trios of Barry Levitt and René Martel provide dance music. Closed Sundays. . . . ¶ In the Plaza Restaurant, violinist George Cardini and pianist Jules Feuerstein play from seven-thirty to ten-thirty, Tuesdays through Saturdays. . . . ¶ There is piano-and-violin music by Jules Kuti and Ernest Schoen in the Palm Court Mondays through Fridays from five to one. Violinist Sandu Marcu tolds the floor Saturdays from five to one and Sundays from four to midnight.

Rainbow Grill, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (PL 7-8970)—Lainie Kazan is the soprano at dinner and supper in this well-run mountain resort. On Monday, April 28, Billy Daniels will replace Miss Kazan. Dance music commences at seven-forty-five. Closed Sundays.

Rainbow Room, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (PL 7-9090)—The **SY OLIVER** orchestra plays for dancing from seven, every night but Sunday.

St. Regis-Sheraton, Fifth Ave. at 55th St. (PL 3-4500)—In the well-nourished Maisonette, French singer-composer-pianist Michel Legrand shows up at dinner and supper, along with Grady Tate, Phil Woods, Joe Beck, Bob Brookmeyer, Randy Brecker, Ron Carter, and vocalist Laury Shelly. On Monday, April 28, Della Reese will take over the premises. Dancing to the music of Charles Turecamo's orchestra. Closed Sundays. . . . ¶ Harpist Eleanor Fell plays in the King Cole Grille every night but Sunday, from seven-thirty to eleven.

Waldorf-Astoria, Park Ave. at 49th St. (EL 5-3000)—In the Empire Room, there will be songs by Tony Martin and dances by Cyd Charisse at dinner and supper through Saturday, April 26. The Empire Room Orchestra plays dance music all evening. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Peter Arno (1904-68)—Cartoons, magazine-cover designs, and book-jacket illustrations spanning a forty-year period. Through Saturday, May 3. (Nicholls, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. Tuesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 5.)

Charles Arnoldi—Wall pieces shaped out of sanded, oiled, or painted tree branches; first one-man show in New York. Through Wednesday, April 30. (Elkon, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

Rosemarie Beck—Figure paintings based on the Orpheus legend. Through May 10. (Poindexter, 24 E. 84th St.)

Joseph Beuys—An environment composed of copper and iron rods arranged against a wall, an antique wooden sled, and two blackboards on which there are drawings. Through May 17. (Feldman, 33 E. 74th St. Open Mondays.)

Hyman Bloom—Abstracts and landscapes by a Boston artist. Through Saturday, April 26. (Dintenfass, 18 E. 67th St.)

Erich Brauer—Paintings and etchings by a member of the Vienna school of Fantastic Realism. Through May 10. (Aberbach, 988 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

Hugh Bulley—Representational landscape and still-life paintings; first one-man show in New York. Through May 10. (Larcada, 23 E. 67th St. Open Mondays.)

Philippe Chomienne—Abstract paintings. Through Saturday, April 26. (Gruenebaum, 25 E. 77th St.)

Chuck Close—Photographic paintings of people's heads. Through Wednesday, April 30. (Bykert, 24 E. 81st St.)

Rosemary Cove—Sculptures of the female figure, most of them small terra-cottas and bronzes but one of them a larger-than-life papier-mâché figure. Through Saturday, April 26. (Ingber, 3 E. 78th St.)

Peter Dechar—Large paintings of outsize pears. Through Saturday, May 3. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

Victor de Grailly (1804-89)—Paintings of American landscapes by a French painter who never visited here but based his work on other artists' engravings. Some of the engravings are also included. Through Saturday, April 26. (Washburn, 820 Madison Ave., at 68th St.)

Sonia Delaunay—Eight large tapestries with geometric designs, along with some gouaches and graphics by an artist now ninety. Through Saturday, May 3. (Zarre, 20 E. 69th St.)

Juan Downey—An installation mounted in homage to Velázquez consisting of a reproduction of "Las Meninas," doctored up with mirrors, television screens, and other arcana. Also drawings by this Chilean artist. Through May 11. (Center for Inter-American Relations, 680 Park Ave., at 68th St. Daily, noon to 6.)

Lynne Drexler—Thickly painted abstract landscapes. Through Saturday, April 26. (Alonzo, 26 E. 63rd St.)

Friedel Dzubas—Recent paintings. Through Wednesday, April 30. (Knoedler Contemporary Art, 19 E. 70th St.)

René Genis—Landscapes of Mykonos and a few still-lifes. Through May 10. (Findlay, 984 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

George Grosz (1893-1959)—A large selection of oils, watercolors, and ink drawings from the Berlin period, 1912-33. Through May 31. (Sabarsky, 987 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

Alexander Hollweg—Three-dimensional painted wood-and-plaster models of factories and meadows; first one-man show in New York. Through May 15. (Kornblee, 58 E. 79th St.)

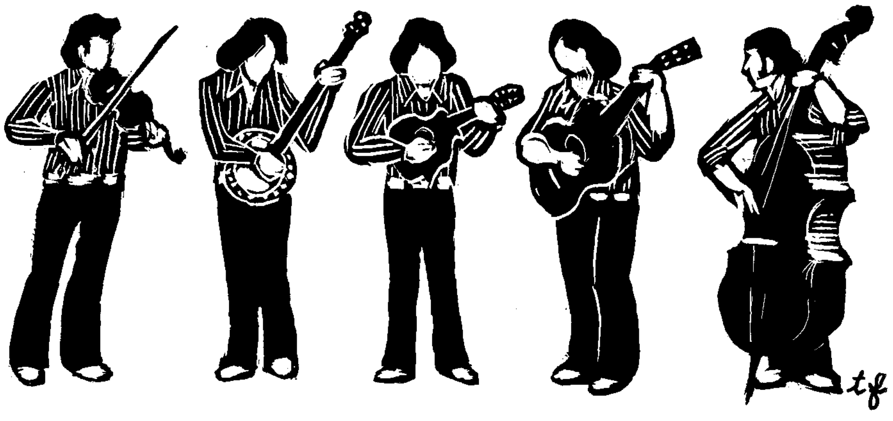
Budd Hopkins—Hard-edge geometric paintings arranged in panels. Through Wednesday, April 30. (Zierler, 956 Madison Ave., at 75th St.)

Wolf Kahn—Landscapes of New England in autumn, mostly. Through Thursday, May 1. (Borgenicht, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Ellsworth Kelly—A new series of paintings, all in shades of gray. Through Saturday, May 3. (Castelli, 4 E. 77th St.)

Robert Keyser—Abstract paintings and drawings. Through May 16. (Rosenberg, 20 E. 79th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

Barbara Lekberg—Figurative bronze sculptures,



GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

welded and cast. Through May 10. (Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St.)

Frances Manacher / Susan Hauer—Paintings. / Collages and small box constructions. Through Saturday, April 26. (Bodley, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

John R. Manning—Paintings and drawings, mostly of farm buildings, emphasizing shadows and substantial shapes. Through Saturday, April 26. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Elsie Manville—Still-lifes and interiors. Through Saturday, April 26. (Kraushaar, 1055 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

André Masson—A comprehensive show of his surrealist works, 1937-43, including paintings and sculptures. Through May 24. (Lerner-Heller, 789 Madison Ave., at 67th St.)

Picasso (1881-1973)—A benefit loan show of more than fifty paintings, with selections from his entire career. Through May 17. (Acquavella, 18 E. 79th St. Tuesdays, 10 to 9; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Harvey Quaytman—Five acrylic paintings on shaped canvases. Through May 10. (McKee, 140 E. 63rd St.)

Robert Reid—Abstract watercolors derived from beach scenes. Through May 17. (Rankow, 108 E. 78th St.)

Paul Resika—Small landscapes in oil. Through Saturday, May 3. (Carlton, 127 E. 69th St.)

John Safer—Free-form sculptures in bronze, brass, and acrylic. Through Saturday, April 26. (Findlay, 984 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

Reeve Schley III—Watercolors of New Mexico and New Jersey, plus a few portraits. Through Saturday, April 26. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Julian Stanczak—Paintings in which color or shades of gray are organized in relation to a grid overlay. Through Saturday, April 26. (Jackson, 32 E. 69th St.)

Janet Stayton—Watercolors, soft canvases mounted in boxes, and a group entitled "Worksheets" that combines various mediums on paper. Through May 17. (Deitcher, 20 E. 67th St.)

John Storrs (1885-1956)—Sculptures and paintings by a Chicago-born artist who studied with Rodin and later worked in Cubist-derived styles. Through Saturday, April 26. (Schoelkopf, 825 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

Edvins Strautmanis / Lawrence Williams—Abstract Expressionist paintings. / Polyester-resin sculptures of feet. Through Wednesday, April 30. (Stone, 48 E. 86th St.)

Anthony Toney—Semi-abstract paintings—landscapes and cityscapes predominating. Through Saturday, April 26. (ACA, 25 E. 73rd St.)

Charmion von Wiegand—Collages. Through Saturday, May 3. (Goldowsky, 1078 Madison Ave., at 81st St.)

Frederick Wardy—Linear black-and-white oils. Through May 24. (Willard, 29 E. 72nd St.)

Group Shows—At the **PERLS**, 1016 Madison Ave., at 78th St.: Thirty works, among them a Calder mobile, a Picasso tapestry, and an oil by Léger. Through May 17. . . . **WEINTRAUB**, 992 Madison Ave., at 77th St.: Paintings and sculptures by Picasso, Marini, and others. Through May 15. . . . **WEYHE**, 794 Lexington Ave., at 61st St.: Drawings and watercolors by, among others, Miklos Suba, Gaston Lachaise, and William Zorach. Through Saturday, May 3. . . . **WILDENSTEIN**, 19 E. 64th St.: A loan exhibition (entrance fee: $2) of still-lifes from the seventeenth to the twentieth century, beginning with paintings of flowers, fruits, meat, fish, and utensils by Dutch masters, and including work by Chardin, Courbet, Manet, Monet, Gauguin, Renoir, van Gogh, Cézanne, Picasso, Matisse, O'Keeffe, and Magritte. Through Saturday, May 3. (Open Mondays.)

Sculpture—Indoor and outdoor pieces (in bronze, terra-cotta, and stone, for instance) by Lucchesi, Manzù, Gross, and others. Through May 30. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3

Saul Baizerman (1889-1957)—Five hammered-copper sculptures by a figurative artist. Through May 17. (Zabriskie, 29 W. 57th St.)

Jack Beal—Three new large paintings, all with figures, and related charcoal drawings. Through May 9. (Frumkin, 41 E. 57th St. Open Mondays; open Saturdays at noon; closed Sundays.)

Max Beckmann (1884-1950)—A small retrospective of paintings. Through Saturday, May 3. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St.). . . ¶ Twenty-three drawings, dated 1909-50, and three bronze sculptures. Through May 10. (Carus, 1044 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Isabel Bishop—Drawings and etchings, as well as a few new paintings, in a show running concurrently with her retrospective at the Whitney Museum. Through May 24. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.)

José de Creeft—Recent sculptures. Through Saturday, April 26. (Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St.)

Howard Kanovitz—Photo-Realist paintings of interiors and street scenes. Through Saturday, April 26. (Stefanotty, 50 W. 57th St.)

Karl-Heinz Krause—Bronze nudes by a contemporary German sculptor. Through May 10. (Selected Artists, 655 Madison Ave., at 60th St. Open Mondays.)

Joan Miró—Paintings and sculptures executed between 1969 and 1974. Through Friday, May 2. (Matisse, 41 E. 57th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

David Parrish—Photo-Realist paintings of motorbikes. Through Saturday, April 26. (Janis, 6 W. 57th St.)

Peter Reginato—Abstract welded-steel floor pieces. Through May 8. (De Nagy, 29 W. 57th St.)

Ernest Trova—Five large sculptures, plus models for outdoor pieces. Through Saturday, May 3. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Anne Truitt—New sculptures and drawings. Through May 15. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

P. Wilson—Abstract paintings on canvas and paper. Through Saturday, April 26. (Esman, 29 W. 57th St.)

Group Shows—At the **IOLAS**, 15 E. 55th St.: Paintings, sculptures, and collages by a group that includes René Magritte, Max Ernst, and Victor Brauner. Through May 10. . . . **RENÉ**, 6 W. 57th St.: An exhibition that is a recreation of one held by Denise René, the owner of this gallery, twenty years ago in Paris. Among the eight painters and sculptors are Vasarely, Agam, Soto, and Duchamp. Through May 17. . . . **SACHS**, 29 W. 57th St.: Paintings, sculptures, and constructions by, among others, Power Boothe, Jackie Ferrara, and John Willenbecher. Through Thursday, May 1.

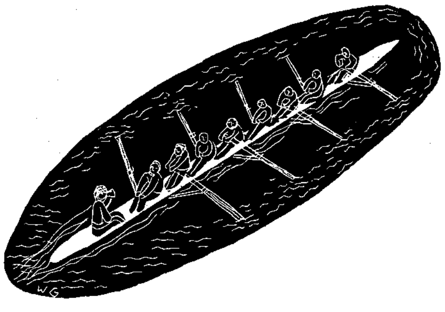
GALLERIES—SoHo

Valerio Aló / Stephanie Brody Lederman—Photo-Realist paintings of gas stations and gas trucks. / Drawings. Through May 8. (Yu, 393 West Broadway.)

Meriam Appel—Abstract oil paintings; first solo show in New York. Through May 10. (Aames, 93 Prince St.)

David Diao—Abstract paintings. Through May 15. (Cuningham Ward, 94 Prince St.)

Sandra Eisenstein / Floyd Johnson—Abstract sculptures made with screening materials. / Acrylic paintings. Through Wednesday, April 30. (Bykert, 484 Broome St. Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6.)



Dan Flavin—Fluorescent-tube sculptures. Through Saturday, April 26. (Castelli and Weber, both at 420 West Broadway.)

Robert Grosvenor—Sculptures made from wooden poles, and the preliminary drawings for them. Through Wednesday, April 30. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Susan Hall—Figurative paintings. Through Friday, May 2. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Patrick Ireland—Sculptures of painted rope. Through Thursday, May 1. (112 Greene Street.)

Ronnie Landfield—Abstract acrylics. Through May 7. (Emmerich, 420 West Broadway.)

Dan Lobel / Gregory M. Ryan—Depictions of New York City street scenes and figures on shaped canvases. / Semi-abstract figure paintings. Through May 8. (Green Mountain, 135 Greene St. Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6.)

Dorothy McGahee—Acrylic paintings, many of couples or groups in outdoor settings; first solo show in New York. Through Thursday, May 1. (Second Story Spring Street Society, 167 Spring St.)

Jane Schneider—Enamelled-steel sculptures in many colors and many sizes; first solo show in New York. Through May 7. (14 Sculptors, 75 Thompson St.)

Eileen Spikol / Shirley Gorelick—Wall and floor pieces, among them plaster masks mounted on wood panels. / Large figurative paintings and etchings. Through May 7. (SoHo 20, 99 Spring St. Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6.)

John L. Stewart / Robert Colescott—Primarily abstract paintings incorporating such images as saws and doorknobs. / Satirical paintings based on social themes. Through May 8. (Razor, 464 West Broadway.)

Michelle Stuart—Rocks, earth, and graphite applied to mounted paper. Through Tuesday, April 29. (Hutchinson, 127 Greene St.)

Sam Wiener / Helen Soreff—Small-scale sculptures of glass and concrete placed on wooden stands. / Linear paintings in muted grays. Through May 13. (Lamagna, 380 West Broadway.)

Group Show—Ronald Bladen showing sculptures, Stuart Shedletsky showing paintings, plus two other artists. Through Wednesday, April 30. (Caldwell, 383 West Broadway.)

OTHER GALLERIES

March Avery—Paintings of animals, landscapes, and seascapes. Through Sunday, April 27. (Waverly, 103 Waverly Pl. Daily, except Wednesdays, noon to 5.)

Brower Hatcher—Colored-wire and steel sculptures. Through Friday, April 25. (City University Graduate Center, ground-floor arcade, 33 W. 42nd St. Mondays through Fridays, 9 to 6.)

Richard Hunt / Henry Moore—Bronze and welded-steel sculptures, all under twenty inches high. / Ten bronzes and three drawings. Through Friday, April 25. (Dorsky, 111 Fourth Ave., at 11th St.)

Richard Stankiewicz—Four welded-steel sculptures. Through Friday, May 2. (Hammarskjöld Plaza Sculpture Garden, Second Ave. at 47th St.)

Group Shows—At the **VISUAL ARTS**, 209 E. 23rd St.: Four Los Angeles artists showing paintings, drawings, and conceptual work. Through May 16. (Mondays through Thursdays, noon to 9; Fridays, 11 to 4:30.). . . **WALKER STREET GALLERY**, 46 Walker St., two blocks south of Canal St., at Broadway: Works in mixed mediums by ten artists. Through May 15. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 5.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

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W. Eugene Smith and Aileen M. Smith—In 1956, the Japanese fishing village of Minamata was struck by an epidemic of a horrible disease of the central nervous system, which (according to a medical report) culminated in "general paralysis, deformity, difficulty in

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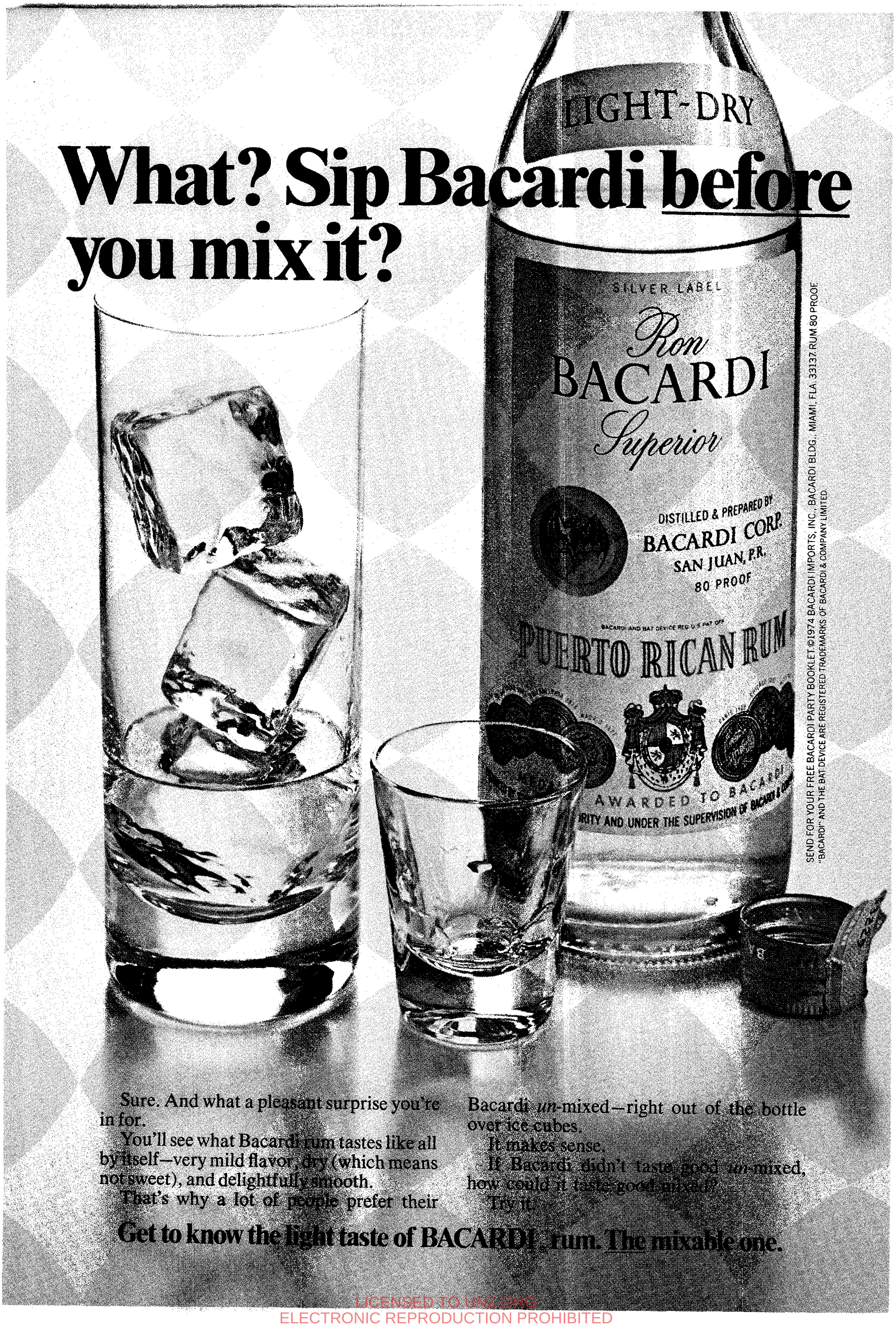
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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swallowing, convulsions, and even death." (Nearly half of the first fifty-two discovered cases died within a year.) The disease, which had already killed most of the cats in the village, was traced to the fish and shellfish that inhabited waters polluted by the Chisso Corporation, a large plastics factory that dumped its wastes in the harbor; methylmercury was eventually identified as the specific poison. Eugene Smith, a former *Life* photographer, and his half-Japanese wife, Aileen, spent three years in Minamata, and have published a book of photographs and text—on which this exhibition is based—documenting the catastrophe and chronicling the long struggle of the victims of "Minamata disease" to get reparation from the Chisso company, which, as one might expect, tried first to conceal its responsibility and then to evade it. After a four-year trial, a group of twenty-nine families won their case against Chisso, and each received sixty to sixty-eight thousand dollars in indemnity. But the Smiths' photographs of maimed, crippled, demented, and agonized men, women, and children (congenital cases also began appearing) show that no amount of money can compensate for physical and mental losses like those suffered by these victims of technological "progress." (An irony noted by the Smiths is that the factory was built in Minamata because village leaders persuaded its founder to do so.) These photographs confirm the power of photography as a medium for conveying the reality of suffering; one cannot look at them without feeling horror, revulsion, pity, and terror. (Other pictures—of meetings, press conferences, demonstrations, parades, local scenery—are gratuitous, mere padding.) The text, conversely, illustrates the ineffectuality of words—at least as the Smiths use them—to re-create experience and to express emotion. One hates to say anything critical of such good people, who sacrificed so much for such a good cause (Smith was beaten up in a demonstration and so seriously injured that he couldn't photograph for several years, and thus a third of the pictures were taken by Aileen), but one can't help wishing that they hadn't produced quite so compelling a testament to the banality of goodness. Through June 29. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Open Sundays.)

●

MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE (1904-71)—Studies of industrial products and machines, portraits of sharecroppers, and pictures taken in Russia in 1930 and 1932. Through Wednesday, April 30. (Schoelkopf, 825 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

LARRY FINK / JOHN MESSINA—Party pictures. / Photographs taken at the East Louisiana State Hospital. Through Tuesday, April 29. (Midtown Y Gallery, 344 E. 14th St. Sundays through Thursdays, noon to 8; Fridays, noon to 4.)

BENNO FRIEDMAN / MINOR WHITE—Hand-colored landscapes and abstractions. / Photographs done from 1943 to the present. Through Saturday, April 26. (Light, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

JOSEF KOUDELKA—Photographs of Gypsies and country people taken during the last decade by a thirty-seven-year-old Czech photographer who left his country in 1968. Through May 11. (Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. Weekdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9; Sundays, noon to 6.)

GEORGE A. TICE—People, cityscapes, and landscapes, as well as plants, trees, and ice forms, in a selection that represents work from 1953 to 1973. Through May 17. (Witkin, 243 E. 60th St. Open Thursday evenings until 8.)

GROUP SHOW—Photographs by Minor White, Paul Strand, and others. Through Tuesday, April 29. (SoHo Photo, 30 W. 13th St. Fridays through Sundays, 1 to 6; Tuesdays, 7:30 P.M. to 9 P.M.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—An exhibition—part of a cultural exchange with Russia—of artifacts recovered from tombs of pre-Christian nomadic cultures. Included are ornate Scythian gold carvings (almost all for personal adornment), as well as objects of bronze, wood, felt, horn, and iron. Through June 29. (May close at 3 on Saturdays and Sundays.) . . . ¶ "The Great Wave" is the name of a remarkable exhibition here of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Japanese woodcuts hung side by side with prints by the Impressionists on whom they exerted an influence. Through May 11. . . . ¶ Twenty-four bronze representations of Buddhist and Hindu deities, from India, Pakistan, and Northeast Asia, dating from the fourth century to the thirteenth. Through May 31. . . . ¶ "Romantic and Glamorous Hollywood Design," a show of costumes worn by such film stars as Mary Pickford, Katharine Hepburn, and Barbra Streisand. Through Aug. 31. . . . ¶ Paintings, including eight large triptychs, by the contemporary British artist Francis Bacon. Through June 29. . . . ¶ A selection of paintings (by, among others, William Powell Frith and Edwin Henry Landseer) that were exhibited at the Royal Academy in London during the reign of Queen Victoria. Through Tuesday, April 29. (Tuesdays, 10 to 8:45; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 4:45; Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—Furniture by Michael Thonet, Hector Guimard, Gerrit Rietveld, and Frank Lloyd Wright. Through Wednesday, April 30. . . . ¶ Drawings, all done between 1920 and 1929, by Moholy-Nagy, Sheeler, Léger, and others. Through June 15. . . . ¶ An exhibit of prints in which works on similar themes by artists of different generations are juxtaposed. Among those represented are Munch, Sloan, and Hockney. Through June 8. (Weekdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9; Sundays, noon to 6.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—Paintings and drawings dating from 1964 to the present by Brice Marden. Through Sunday, April 27. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesday evenings, 6 to 9, with no admission charge; Sundays, noon to 6.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—A retrospective of the work of the realist painter Isabel Bishop. Through June 1. A complementary show is at the Midtown Galleries, 11 E. 57th St. . . . ¶ Paintings, drawings, and constructions by Roy De Forest. Through May 4. (Weekdays, 11 to 6; Tuesday evenings, 6 to 10, with no admission charge; Sundays, noon to 6.)

WHITNEY DOWNTOWN MUSEUM, 55 Water St., two blocks south of Wall St.—A show of New York painting originating during the years 1941-47, including early examples of Abstract Expressionism by Willem de Kooning, Lee Krasner, Robert Motherwell, and others. Through May 28. (Mondays through Fridays, 11 to 3.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—Nineteenth- and twentieth-century American paintings by, among others, Thomas Cole, Arthur B. Davies, and Albert Pinkham Ryder. Through June 29. . . . ¶ A small exhibit of contemporary Japanese ceramics (jars, bowls, plates, and bottles) on loan from a private collection. Through Sunday, April 27. (Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 11 to 5.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A model of a huge prehistoric flying reptile, a pterosaur, with a wingspan of fifty-one feet. Through May 4. (Weekdays, 10 to 4:45; Sundays, 11 to 5.)

CHINA HOUSE, 125 E. 65th St.—A loan show of jades, dating from 2000 B.C. through the Han Dynasty (220 A.D.). Through June 15. (Mondays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, 2 to 5.)

THE CLOISTERS, Fort Tryon Park—"The Secular Spirit" is the title of a loan exhibit of about three hundred objects made for everyday use between 1300 and 1550, ranging from household utensils to works of art. Through June 3. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 4:45; Sundays, 1 to 4:45.)

JEWISH MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—More than thirty tapestries made from the designs of various contemporary artists. Through Sunday, April 27. (Mondays through Thursdays, noon to 5; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

MUSEUM OF AMERICAN FOLK ART, 49 W. 53rd St.—New York wood sculptures (decoys, cigar-store figures, and trade signs, for example) from the seventeenth century to the present. Through June 1. (Daily, except Mondays, 10:30 to 5:30.)

MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"How Grim Was My City" is an exhibition of photographs, documents, and objects intended to show that late-nineteenth-century New York was not the charming place that art and nostalgia have created but was a city of "grinding poverty, decimating disease, intolerable housing, filth, congestion, and crime." Through Sept. 1. . . . ¶ An exhibit, including paintings, drawings, and costumes, celebrating great women of the New York stage. Through Sept. 1. . . . ¶ Century-old dolls, new dolls, Easter eggs, and Victorian toys are part of "A Dolls' Easter." Through May 4. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

NEW YORK CULTURAL CENTER, 2 Columbus Circle—A retrospective exhibition of paintings by Leon Golub. . . . ¶ A show of American prints done during the last two years by James Rosenquist, Yvonne Jacquette, Joe Goode, and others. Both through May 4. (Wednesdays through Sundays, 1 to 6.)

STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM, 2033 Fifth Ave., at 125th St.—Portraits by Kwasi Seitu Asantey. Through May 29. (Mondays and Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, 10 to 6; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for Avery Fisher Hall is TR 4-2424, for Carnegie Hall CI 7-7459, and for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—Final performances of the season—Wednesday, April 23, at 8: "Die Tote Stadt," with Carol Neblett, Diane Curry, John Alexander, and Charles Roe; conducted by Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Thursday, April 24, at 8: "Faust," with Patricia Wells, Jeanne Piland, Richard Taylor, and Samuel Ramey; George Branson Gray. . . . ¶ Friday, April 25, at 8: "Madame Butterfly," with Maralin Niska, Diane Curry, Gaetano Scano, and Richard Fredricks; Giuseppe Morelli. . . . ¶ Saturday, April 26, at 2: "Die Tote Stadt," with Carol Neblett, Diane Curry, Richard Kness, and Charles Roe; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Saturday, April 26, at 8: "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," with Patricia Wise, Sandra Walker, Richard Stilwell, and Tullio Pane; Giuseppe Morelli. . . . ¶ Sunday, April 27, at 1: "Cavalleria Rusticana," with Olivia Stapp and Walter Rinaldi, and "Pagliacci," with Diana Soviero and Robert Nagy; Luigi Martelli. . . . ¶ Sunday, April 27, at 7: "Carmen," with Joann Grillo, Catherine Malfitano, Gaetano Scano, and John Darrenkamp; Christopher Keene. (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. TR 7-4727.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—Leonard Bernstein conducting the second of two performances of an all-Tchaikovsky program, with Boris Belkin, violin. (Avery Fisher Hall. Thursday, April 24, at 8:30.)

ROTTERDAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA—Edo de Waart conducting, with Kyung-Wha Chung, violin. (Carnegie Hall. Thursday, April 24, at 8.)

PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA—Eugene Ormandy conducting the final concert of the season here, with Rudolf Serkin, piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Monday, April 28, at 8:15.)

CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA—At Carnegie Hall, Georg Solti conducting the final concerts of the season here—Tuesday, April 29, at 8: A Stravinsky-Bruckner program; no soloists. . . . ¶ Wednesday, April 30, at 8: A performance of Verdi's Requiem, with Leontyne Price, soprano; Yvonne Minton, mezzo-soprano; Luciano Pavarotti, tenor; Gwynne

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Howell, bass; and the Chicago Symphony Chorus. . . . ¶ Friday, May 2, at 8: A varied program, with Tamás Vásáry, piano.

Musica Aeterna Orchestra—Frederic Waldman conducting the final concert of the season, with Clifford Curzon, piano. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Saturday, April 26, at 8. All seats have been sold, and only standing room is left.)

Our Bach Concert—Henry Schuman conducting an orchestra and playing the oboe, with the New York Saxophone Quartet. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, April 26, at midnight.)

New York Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra—Raffael Adler conducting. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Monday, April 28, at 8.)

Contemporary Chamber Ensemble—Arthur Weisberg conducting, with Heinz Holliger, oboist-composer, and Gilbert Kalish, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Thursday, May 1, at 8.)

Brooklyn Philharmonia—Lukas Foss conducting the last in a "Meet the Moderns" series of concerts, with the Speculum Musicae, the Gregg Smith Singers, and groups from Boston and Philadelphia. Composers John Cage and Lejaren Hiller will be present and participate in a discussion at the end of the evening. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Saturday, May 3, from 7 to 11.)

Mannes Chorus—Richard Westenburg directing a performance of Orff's opera "Carmina Burana" in concert form. (Mannes College of Music, 157 E. 74th St. Wednesday, April 23, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Glee Club of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick—George Mead directing. (Town Hall. JU 2-4536. Friday, April 25, at 8:30.)

Sine Nomine Singers—Harry Saltzman directing a program of Elizabethan music, with the New York Consort of Viols. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, April 26, at 8.)

Concordia Choir—Ralph C. Schultz directing. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, April 27, at 3.)

RECITALS

Régine Crespin—Soprano, in a program of French songs and operetta arias. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, April 23, at 8.)

Emanuel Ax—Piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, April 23, at 8.)

Francesco Trio—Chamber music. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, April 24, at 8.)

Gina Bachauer—Piano. (Hunter College Assembly Hall, Park Ave. at 69th St. 535-5350. Saturday, April 26, at 8.)

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf—Soprano. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, April 27, at 8.)

New School Concerts—Alexander Schneider, violin; Walter Trampler, viola; and Jens Nygaard, harpsichord, in the final concert of the season. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. 741-5689. Sunday, April 27, at 8.)

Stoddard Lincoln—Keyboard. (City University Graduate Center, third-floor music studio, 33 W. 42nd St. Monday, April 28, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

LaSalle Quartet—The last two in a series of concerts presenting the complete quartets of Schoenberg, Webern, and Berg. (Alice Tully Hall. Monday, April 28, at 8, with Bethany Beardslee, soprano; and Thursday, May 1, at 8, no guest artist.)

Group for Contemporary Music—A program of music by Charles Ives, Donald Martino, Francis Thorne, and Eric Lundborg. (Hubbard Recital Hall, Manhattan School of Music, 120 Claremont Ave., at 122nd St. Monday, April 28, at 8. Admission by contribution.)

Robert Miller—Piano, in the last in a series of programs of contemporary American music. (Alice Tully Hall. Tuesday, April 29, at 8:30.)

Guarneri Quartet—With Rudolf Firkusny, piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, April 30, at 8.)

Da Capo Chamber Players—The last in a series of concerts of contemporary music, this one with Mario Davidovsky, speaker, and Gordon Gottlieb, percussion. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Wednesday, April 30, at 8.)

American Brass Quintet—The last in a series of concerts of premières. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Friday, May 2, at 8.)

Grace Harrington—Piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, May 3, at 8.)

JAZZ/FOLK/ROCK/ETC.

Interludes—A varied series of hour-long performances at Town Hall (JU 2-4536)—Wednesday, April 23, at 5:45: ANITA ELLIS AND ELLIS LARKINS. . . . ¶ Wednesday, April 30, at 5:45: ANITA LOOS.

Countsmen—Earle Warren, Eddie Durham, Paul Quinichette, Dill Jones, Franklin Skeete, and Ronnie Cole, in a benefit concert. (Wollman Auditorium, Ferris Booth Hall, Broadway at 115th St. Wednesday, April 23, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Hot Tuna—Academy of Music, 126 E. 14th St. Friday, April 25, at 8 and 11:30. For information about tickets, call 757-9516.

Taj Mahal—With Mose Allison. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, April 25, at 8.)

Charles Rouse and Company—Carnegie Recital Hall. Friday, April 25, at 8.

A Night of the Blues—Albert King, John Lee Hooker, Louisiana Red, Peg Leg Sam, and the Wooten Singers. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Saturday, April 26, at 7 and 11.)

Lou Reed—With String Driven Thing. (Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden, Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts. 564-4400. Saturday, April 26, at 8.)

Les Paul, Bucky Pizzarelli, George Benson, and Laurindo Almeida—Carnegie Hall. Saturday, April 26, at 8.

Preservation Hall Jazz Band—Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center. Saturday, April 26, at 8.

National Jazz Ensemble—Chuck Israels conducting the last in a series of concerts, this one with Phil Woods. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Saturday, April 26, at 8. For information about tickets, call 741-5620.)

Feenjon Group—Hunter College Assembly Hall, Park Ave. at 69th St. 535-5350. Sunday, April 27, at 3.

Milt Hinton Quartet—New York Jazz Museum, 125 W. 55th St. Sunday, April 27, at 3, 4, and 5. No tickets necessary.

Tom Paxton—Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, April 27, at 8.

The Age of Elegance—Music of the forties and fifties, with DeMaio and Silver, Nancy Dussault, Karen Morrow, and 20th Century. (Town Hall. Tuesday, April 29, at 8.)

Jeff Beck and the Mahavishnu Orchestra (with John McLaughlin)—Avery Fisher Hall. Wednesday and Thursday, April 30-May 1, at 8.

Ian Hunter and Mick Ronson—Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden. Thursday, May 1, at 8.

Country in New York—Merle Haggard and his band and Willie Nelson. (Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden. Friday, May 2, at 7 and 10.)

Minnie Riperton—Avery Fisher Hall. Friday, May 2, at 8.

Helen Reddy and Peter Allen—Avery Fisher Hall. Saturday, May 3, at 7:30.

Arlo Guthrie—Carnegie Hall. Saturday, May 3, at 8.

Nektar—Academy of Music. Saturday, May 3, at 8.

SPORTS

Baseball—At Shea Stadium—METS: Vs. St. Louis, Wednesday, April 23, at 2:05. . . . ¶ Montreal, Friday, May 2, at 8:05, and Saturday, May 3, at 2:15. . . . YANKEES: Vs. Milwaukee, Friday, April 25, at 8; Saturday, April 26, at 2; and Sunday, April 27, at 1 (doubleheader). . . . ¶ Cleveland, Monday and Tuesday, April 28-29, at 8. . . . ¶ Baltimore, Wednesday and Thursday, April 30-May 1, at 8.

Crew—Goes Trophy Regatta: Cornell, Navy, and Syracuse. (Syracuse. Saturday, April 26.) . . . ¶ Compton Cup Regatta: Harvard, M.I.T., and Princeton. (Boston. Saturday, April 26.) . . . ¶ Blackwell Cup Regatta: Pennsylvania, St. Joseph's, and Yale. (Derby, Conn. Saturday, April 26.) . . . ¶ Adams Cup Regatta: Harvard, Navy, and Pennsylvania. (Philadelphia. Saturday, May 3.) . . .

¶ Carnegie Cup Regatta: Cornell, Princeton, and Yale. (Ithaca. Saturday, May 3.)

Hockey—Stanley Cup East Division quarter-final playoffs: Islanders vs. Pittsburgh Penguins. (Nassau Coliseum, Hempstead Turnpike, Uniondale, L.I. 516 794-9100. Thursday, April 24, at 8, if necessary.)

Racing—At AQUEDUCT: Weekdays at 1:30; through Saturday, May 31. The Top Flight Handicap, Saturday, April 26, and the Grey Lag Handicap, Saturday, May 3. . . GARDEN STATE PARK, Cherry Hill, N.J.: Weekdays at 2; through Tuesday, May 27. . . . CHURCHILL DOWNS, Louisville, Ky.: The Kentucky Derby, Saturday, May 3.

Track—Penn Relays. (Philadelphia. Friday and Saturday, April 25-26.)

Trotting—At ROOSEVELT RACEWAY, Westbury: Weekdays at 8; through Saturday, May 17. . . . SARATOGA RACEWAY, Saratoga Springs: Weekdays at 8:15; through Saturday, Nov. 15.

FOR CHILDREN

Music—By the NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC: Michael Tilson Thomas conducting the final children's concerts of the season. (Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center. TR 4-2424. Saturday, April 26, at 12:10 and 2:30.) . . . LIGHT OPERA OF MANHATTAN: "H.M.S. Pinafore," Saturday and Sunday, April 26-27, at 4. . . . ¶ "Naughty Marietta," Saturday, May 3, at 4. (Jan Hus Playhouse, 351 E. 74th St. 535-6310.)

Stage Shows—By the AMERICAN-SCANDINAVIAN CHILDREN'S THEATRE: "Pippi Longstocking: Her Life and Times." (McMillin Theatre, Broadway at 116th St. Saturday, April 26, at 3. No tickets necessary.) . . . B. GAY PUPPETS: "The Golden Melon." (Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St. LE 4-1672. Saturday, April 26, at 1:30. Children under three not admitted, and children under five must be accompanied by an adult.) . . . MERI MINI PLAYERS: "Looice," Saturdays at 2:30. . . . ¶ "Alice Through the Looking Glass," Sundays at 2:30. (Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. For tickets, call 697-0730.)

Movies—"The Red Balloon," a French film without dialogue. (Park East Synagogue, 163 E. 67th St. Sunday, April 27, at 2. For tickets, call RE 7-6900.)

Hayden Planetarium, Central Park W. at 81st St. (873-1300)—The current show is called "Between the Planets." (Mondays through Fridays at 2 and 3:30; Saturdays at 11, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5; and Sundays at 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Children under five not admitted.)

ET ALIA

(The New York Parks Department number to call for information about all free entertainment in the city is 472-1003.)

Poetry Readings—Louis Simpson reading from the works of Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, and William Carlos Williams. (Donnell Library Auditorium, 20 W. 53rd St. Tuesday, April 29, at 7:30. Admission is free.)

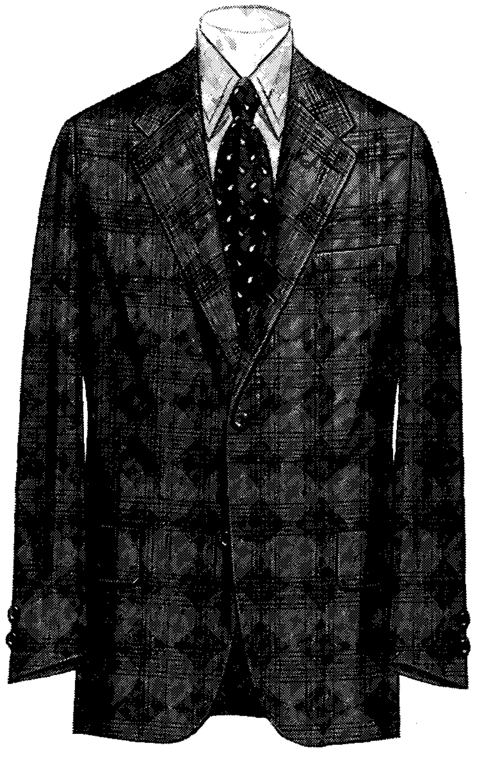
Lecture—"The Composer as Designer: Changing Ideas About the Role of Scenery in the Presentation of a Musical Drama," by Andrew Porter. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. Saturday, May 3, at 4. Admission is free, but seating is limited, so it would be wise to arrive early.)

Amateur Needlework of Today—The nineteenth national benefit exhibition contains handbags, rugs, pictures, chair covers, and other items, in needlepoint and embroidery. Included are pieces by Joanne Woodward, Ethel Merman, Betty Furness, and Benay Venuta. Through Wednesday, April 30. (The Lighthouse, 111 E. 59th St. Weekdays, 10 to 5, and Thursday evening until 7:30.)

Walking Tour—"Murray Hill," a conducted tour sponsored by the Museum of the City of New York, will take place on Sunday, April 27. It will meet at the southwest corner of Fifth Ave. and 33rd St., at 2:30. For reservations, call LE 4-1672.

Flea Market—The New York Flea Market, at Sixth Ave. and 25th St., is open every Sunday, weather permitting, from noon to 7.

Auctions—At the Sotheby Parke Bernet, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.)—Wednesday and Thursday, April 23-24, at 2: Chinese ceramics and snuff bottles, from many collectors. . . . ¶ Friday, April 25, at 10:15 and 2, and Saturday, April 26, at 2: Silver and *objets de vertu*, from a number of sources.



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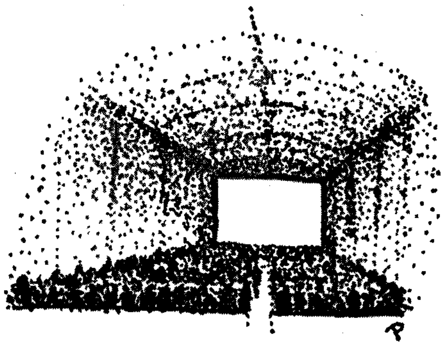
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN



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Art, 36 E. 8th. (GR 3-7014)
"Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore."

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Through April 26: "Shadow of a Doubt" and "Foreign Correspondent."
April 27: "Private Lives" and "The Scoundrel."
April 28: "Whirlpool" and "Fallen Angel."
April 29: "To Be or Not to Be" and "Forsaking All Others."
From April 30: "White Savage" and "Cobra Woman."

St. Marks Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 8th. (777-1955)
Through April 29: "Blazing Saddles" and "The New Land."
From April 30: To be announced.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
"Murder on the Orient Express."

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (GR 5-1660)
Through April 29: "Emmanuelle."
From April 30: "The Stepford Wives."

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
"The Great Waldo Pepper."

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore."

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Ten Little Indians."

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (PL 9-1411)
"The Prisoner of Second Avenue."

Trans-Lux East, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (PL 9-2262)
"The Towering Inferno."

Fine Arts, 130 E. 58th. (755-6030)
"And Now My Love."

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (EL 5-3320)
"Rosebud."

Baronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
"The Passenger."

Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
"Shampoo."

R.K.O. 59th St. Twin I, 220 E. 59th. (688-1717)
Through April 24: "Amarcord."
From April 25 at 6: "The Reincarnation of Peter Proud."

R.K.O. 59th St. Twin 2, 220 E. 59th. (688-0750)
"Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore."

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
April 23: "King of Hearts."
From April 24: "Touch and Go."

Cinema I, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (PL 3-6022)
"Hearts and Minds."

Cinema II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (PL 3-0774)
Through April 26: "Stavisky."
From April 27: "Monty Python and the Holy Grail."

Columbia I, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
"A Woman Under the Influence."

Columbia II, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-2720)
Through April 28: "Emmanuelle."
From April 29: "Aloha, Bobby, and Rose."

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (RE 7-2622)
April 23: "The Long Goodbye" and "Sleeper."
April 24: "Belle de Jour" and "Darling."
April 25: "Dr. Strangelove" and "Morgan!"
April 26: "Catch-22" and "Rosemary's Baby."
April 27: "Day for Night" and "Mean Streets."
April 28: "Woman in the Dunes" and "Tokyo Story."
April 29: "Lacombe, Lucien" and "The Heartbreak Kid."
April 30: "Ulysses" and "Chloé in the Afternoon."
May 1: "Fellini Satyricon" and "The Passion of Anna."

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (RE 4-0302)
"The Middle of the World."

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Funny Lady."

72nd Street East, 1st Ave. at 72nd. (BU 8-9304)
Through April 29: "The Four Musketeers."
From April 30: "Lenny."

Juliet 2, 3rd Ave. at 83rd. (249-1806)
"Murder on the Orient Express."

Trans-Lux 85th St., Madison at 85th. (BU 8-3180)
"Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore."

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Ten Little Indians."

Loews Orpheum, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
"Funny Lady."

Loews Ciné, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (427-1332)
"Capone."

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
"The Great Waldo Pepper."

R.K.O. 86th St. Twin I, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
"Chinatown" and "The Conversation."

R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 2, Lexington at 86th. (289-8932)
Through April 24: "Sheba, Baby" and "If He Hollers, Let Him Go!"
From April 25 at 6: "The Reincarnation of Peter Proud."

WEST SIDE

Bleecker St. Cinema, 144 Bleecker St. (Separate admissions; call 674-2560 for particulars.)
April 23: "The Clowns" / "Eva" / A program of erotic films by women.
April 24: "Eva" / "The Deluge, Part I" / "The Deluge, Part II."
April 25: "The Boy Friend" / "The Slip-Up" / A program of erotic films by women.
April 26: "Painters Painting" / "The Boy Friend" / A program of erotic films by women / "Isn't Life Wonderful."
April 27: "Painters Painting" / "Children of Paradise" / "Sally of the Sawdust" / "The Boy Friend."
April 28: "Darling" / "Hour of the Furnaces" / "Circus Girls."
April 29: "Negatives" / "Butterflies" / "Darling."
April 30-May 1: "Dr. Strangelove" / "Day of Wrath" / "Black Thursday."

Waverly, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
"The Four Musketeers."

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (GR 7-7874)
Through April 29: "Amarcord."
From April 30: "Stavisky."

Greenwich, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Through April 29: "Report to the Commissioner."
From April 30 (tentative): "Rosebud."

Quad Cinemas I, 2, 3, and 4, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Through April 29 at one or another of the theatres: "Chinatown" and "The Conversation" / "Her Taste of Freedom" / "Blazing Saddles" and "The Producers" / "A Woman Under the Influence."
From April 30: To be announced.

Elgin, 8th Ave. at 19th. (675-0935)
April 23: "The Boys in the Band" and "Sunday Bloody Sunday."
April 24-26: "The Grande Bouffe" and "Fellini Satyricon."
April 27: One performance, at noon, of "Anne of the Thousand Days."
April 27-28: "The Garden of the Finzi-Continis" and "Brother Sun, Sister Moon."
April 29: "The Chase" and "Bonnie and Clyde."
April 30: "Executive Action" and "The Terminal Man."
May 1: "Deranged" and "The Trip."

New Embassy, B'way at 46th. (PL 7-2408)
"Earthquake."

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (PL 7-2406)
"Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore."

Music Hall, 6th Ave. at 50th. (757-3100)
April 23: "At Long Last Love."
April 24-30: "Gone with the Wind."
From May 1: "2001: A Space Odyssey."

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Tommy."

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (581-2323)
Through April 24: "Young Frankenstein."
From April 25: "Harry & Tonto."

Playboy, 110 W. 57th. (JU 6-4448)
Through April 29: "The Stepford Wives" and "Law and Disorder."
From April 30: "Freebie and the Bean" and "The Super Cops."

Little Carnegie, 146 W. 57th. (246-5123)
"A Brief Vacation."

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)
April 23: "La Salamandre" and "Charles Dead or Alive."
April 24: "Husbands" and "Minnie and Moskowitz."
April 25: "Lola Montès" and "The Exile."
April 26: "And Now for Something Completely Different" and "Firesign Funnies."
April 27: "Long Day's Journey Into Night" and "Suddenly, Last Summer."
April 28: "Love in the Afternoon" and "Ariane."
April 29: "Les Dames du Bois de Boulogne" and "Diary of a Country Priest."
April 30: "Raven's End" and "Adalen 31."
May 1: "Murmur of the Heart" and "The Fire Within."

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"Don't Cry with Your Mouth Full."

Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"The Godfather, Part II."

Cinema Studio, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Through April 29: "Amarcord."
From April 30: "Story of a Love Affair."

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
Through April 26: "Donkey Skin."
From April 27: "The Invitation."

Embassy 72nd St., B'way at 72nd. (SC 4-6745)
Through April 29: "Murder on the Orient Express."
From April 30: "Arthur Rubinstein—Love of Life" and "Minnie and Moskowitz."

Loews 83rd St., B'way at 83rd. (877-3190)
"Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore."

New Yorker, B'way at 88th. (TR 4-9189)
"The Four Musketeers."

Symphony, B'way at 95th. (AC 2-6600)
Through April 29: "Chinatown" and "The Conversation."
From April 30: "The Yakuza."

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)
"Report to the Commissioner."

Olympia, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Through April 29: "The Sting" and "American Graffiti."
From April 30: "Murder on the Orient Express" and "Bang the Drum Slowly."

FILM LIBRARIES

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (956-7078)—April 23 at 5:30: "The Warrior's Husband" (1933), directed by Walter Lang, with Elissa Landi and Marjorie Rambeau. . . . ¶ April 24 at 5:30: "Doctors' Wives" (1931), directed by Frank Borzage, with Warner Baxter and Joan Bennett. . . . ¶ April 24 at 8: "Bad Girl" (1931), directed by Frank Borzage, with James Dunn and Sally Eilers. . . . ¶ April 25 at 2: "Such Is Life" (1929), a Czech-German silent film, directed by Carl Junghans; music track on print, made without inter-titles. . . . ¶ April 25 at 5:30 and April 26 at noon: "M" (1931), in German, directed by Fritz Lang, with Peter Lorre; English subtitles. . . . ¶ April 26 at 3: "Merely Mary Ann" (1931), directed by Henry King, with Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell. . . . ¶ April 26 at 5:30: "George White's Scandals" (1934), directed by George White and Thornton Freeland, with

Rudy Vallée and Jimmy Durante. . . . ¶ April 27 at 12:30 and 3: Program to be announced. . . . ¶ April 27 at 5:30: "Rules of the Game" (1939), in French, directed by Jean Renoir, with Marcel Dalio; English subtitles. . . . ¶ April 28 at 2: "Doctors' Wives.". . . ¶ April 28 at 5:30: "Merely Mary Ann.". . . ¶ April 29 at 2: "The Wave" (1935), in Spanish, directed by Fred Zinnemann and Emilio Gomez Muriel, photographed by Paul Strand; English subtitles. . . . ¶ April 29 at 5:30: "Models" (1972), directed by Taka Iimura. . . . ¶ April 30 at 5:30: "The Wave." . . . ¶ May 1 at 5:30: "The Shanghai Gesture" (1941), directed by Josef von Sternberg, with Gene Tierney and Victor Mature. . . . ¶ May 1 at 8: "George White's Scandals." (A limited number of tickets are available, but only to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing or, if it is a Sunday, after noon. Tickets for the showings at 8 will not be accepted before 7:30.)

New York Cultural Center, 2 Columbus Circle. (LT 1-2311)—April 24: "Disraeli" (1929), directed by Alfred E. Green, with George Arliss and Joan Bennett. . . . ¶ April 25: "Kitty Foyle" (1940), directed by Sam Wood, with Ginger Rogers and Dennis Morgan. . . . ¶ April 26-27: "The Major and the Minor" (1942), directed by Billy Wilder, with Ginger Rogers and Ray Milland. . . . ¶ May 1: "The Purchase Price" (1932), directed by William A. Wellman, with Barbara Stanwyck and George Brent. (Showings Thursdays through Sundays at 3:30 and 5:30. A limited number of tickets are available, but only to those applying for them in person at the center after 1 on the day of the showing.)

Whitney Museum, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—Through April 29: "Heaven and Earth Magic Feature" (1961), directed by Harry Smith. . . . ¶ Starting April 30: "Learning to Dance in Bali" (1939), directed by Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead; "Microcultural Incidents in Ten Zoos" (1971), directed by Ray L. Birdwhistell and Jacques D. Van Vlack; and "Dance and Human History" (1974), directed by Alan Lomax and Forrestine Pauley. Showings at noon (except Wednesdays), 2, and 4 (plus 6 and 8 on Tuesday evenings). Call desk (794-0630) for ticket information.

Anthology Film Archives, 80 Wooster St. (226-0010)—Programs by Ozu, Murnau, Peterson, Riefenstahl, Cortez, Acconci, Freed, Méliès, Rossellini, Sharits, Pudovkin, Ruttman, Fitzgibbon, Renoir, Vertov, and others. Showings April 23-24 at 5, 7, and 9:30; April 25 at 6 and 10; April 26 at 2:30, 6, 8, and 10; April 27 at 8; April 29-30 at 5, 7, and 9:30; and May 1 at 5, 7, and 9.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
THE DATE OF REVIEW IN THESE PAGES IS GIVEN FOR FILMS LESS THAN TWO YEARS OLD.

Adalen 31 (1969)—Bo Widerberg, whose last film was "Elvira Madigan," tells the story of a strike in 1931, from the point of view of an adolescent boy whose father died in it. Widerberg is a young director of great sensitivity and talent, yet, for all its beauty, his film is not a full achievement. In Swedish. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 30.)

Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore—Ellen Burstyn stars in this Martin Scorsese comedy, from an original script by Robert Getchell, about a thirty-five-year-old widow who sets out with her young son to make a new life. Full of funny malice and breakneck vitality, it's absorbing and intelligent even when the issues it raises get all fouled up. With Harvey Keitel, Kris Kristofferson, Valerie Curtin, Lelia Goldoni, Lane Bradbury, Diane Ladd, and, as the son, wire-drawn little Alfred Lutter, who has crack comedy timing. (Reviewed in our issue of 1/13/75.) (Art, 34th St. East, R.K.O. 59th St. Twin 2, Trans-Lux 85th St., Guild, and Loews 83rd St.)

Aloha, Bobby, and Rose—With Paul Le Mat, Dianne Hull, and Tim McIntire, directed by Floyd Mutrux. (Columbia II; starting April 29.)

Amarcord—Directed by Fellini, a reversion to the great days of his "8½," but even more beautiful and detailed. The film is set in small-town Italy at the beginning of Fascism, as seen through the eyes of a boy (called Titta, played by Bruno Zanin), and it catches the sense of Italianate fun, the small-town self-importance that Fellini understands and loves. In Italian. (9/23/74) (R.K.O. 59th St. Twin 1; through April 24. . . . ¶ 8th St. Playhouse, and Cinema Studio; through April 29.)

American Graffiti (1973)—The second feature film by the young George Lucas, about the teen-age world of 1962 in small-town northern California. We again inhabit the post-McCarthy, pre-Vietnam-protest land of drive-ins, old cars dangerously raced, Elvis haircuts, ritual necking. We live through a long night and dawn with the kids, but the next day comes up, and decisions have to be made about taking planes East to college and hiding homesickness. Flashy photography, perhaps more film knowledge than the film can use, but worth seeing. (8/13/73) (Olympia; through April 29.)

And Now for Something Completely Different (1972)—Selected skits from the BBC-TV series called "Monty Python's Flying Circus." (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 26.)

And Now My Love—A winsome love story that believes firmly in the predetermination of love and in the gifts of Lelouch. The film includes one of those cinéastes' *hommages*—an unusual one, to a movie by Lelouch himself ("A Man and a Woman"). The man in the current movie (André Dussollier) is a poor but honest jailbird who turns to porno filmmaking, then to commercial filmmaking, then to a future of Lelouch-like, snow-white feature filmmaking about life, love, and death; this takes him to America, travelling first-class. The girl (Marthe Keller), rich but also honest, and very, very bored, inherits a fortune from her father (Charles Denner). She becomes a Socialist, gives away her fortune, throws on a simple mackintosh, casually tells her posh current chap at the door of their colossally grand house to sell it, goes to the airport (in a chauffeur-driven car), and travels to America. She, too, goes first-class, in spite of her Socialism, because she and André Dussollier have been fated to meet all through the film: in a Lelouch movie, love and the director's sense of convenience conquer all. There is a nice side character (Charles Gérard), an older jailbird turned film producer, who has an interesting expertise in hens. Story and screenplay by Lelouch and Peter Uytterhoeven. In French. (4/7/75) (Fine Arts.)

Anne of the Thousand Days (1970)—Literate and civilized, but not very exciting. Richard Burton plays Henry VIII to Geneviève Bujold's Anne Boleyn. (Elgin; April 27, one performance, at noon.)

Ariane (1934)—The most extraordinarily charming waif the screen has known, Elisabeth Bergner had techniques that must have made other actresses rend their flesh in envy. Her little sharp face is so acutely, magically sensitive that it's practically a deprivation when the camera moves to someone else—which, however, doesn't happen very often in a film directed, as this one is, by her husband, Paul Czinner. The story, from the Claude Anet novel, is about a schoolgirl in Paris who falls in love with a man-about-town who simply wants a casual interlude. It's slight but flavorfully so. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 28.)

Arthur Rubinstein—Love of Life (1969)—An exhilarating documentary, winner of an Academy Award, directed by François Reichenbach and S. G. Patris. (Embassy 72nd St.; starting April 30.)

At Long Last Love—Peter Bogdanovich's stillborn musical comedy, with Burt Reynolds as a bored millionaire playboy, Cybill Shepherd as a spoiled heiress, and sixteen Cole Porter songs. Performed as they are here, their antique smartness sounds smug, though "Find Me a Primitive Man," with Madeline Kahn nudging her thighs together, has some humor. (3/24/75) (Music Hall; April 23.)

Bang the Drum Slowly (1973)—A fictional story, with very good, offhand dialogue by Mark Harris (based on his own novel), about an ace pitcher locked in alliance to a dumb catcher, dying of Hodgkin's disease, whom he once hated for slow-wittedness. Directed by John Hancock, with Michael Moriarty as the pitcher, and Robert De Niro as the doomed catcher. (9/10/73) (Olympia; starting April 30.)

Belle de Jour (1967)—Buñuel's beautiful and gently comic color film of a well-bred girl's rapt fantasies of sadomasochism. Catherine Deneuve as the heroine. In French. (Beekman; April 24.)

Black Thursday—With Christian Rist and Christine Pascal, directed by Michel Mitrani. In French. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 30-May 1.)

Blazing Saddles (1974)—Mel Brooks's comedy of chaos, with a surfeit of chaos and a scarcity of comedy. The story is about a modern black hipster (Cleavon Little) who becomes sheriff in a Western town in the eighteen-sixties; Gene Wilder and Madeline Kahn manage to redeem some of the film, but most of the cast (including Brooks himself) mug and smirk and shout insults at each other. Brooks's celebrated spontaneous wit isn't in evidence: the old gags here never were very funny; rehashed, they just seem desperate. (2/18/74) (St. Marks Cinema, and Quad Cinema; through April 29.)

Bonnie and Clyde (1967)—Violent, funny, and one of the best American movies of the sixties. Faye Dunaway and Warren Beatty as the Depression outlaws who show off their big guns and their defiance of the law. The Arthur Penn movie plays upon our attitudes toward the American past by making the holdups look as dated as two-reel comedy. (Elgin; April 29.)

The Boy Friend (1971)—Ken Russell has turned the Sandy Wilson show into an anti-musical and destroyed most of the pleasure the audience might have had. The glittering, joyless numbers keep coming at you; you never get any relief from Russell's supposed virtuosity. Twiggy sings adequately (though not well enough for the load of singing she's asked to carry), and she dances rather better, but Russell doesn't develop her possibilities, and she remains an appealing blank. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 25-27.)

The Boys in the Band (1970)—A gathering of homosexuals like the gathering of bitchy ladies in "The Women," but with a forties-movie bomber-crew cast: a Catholic, a Jew, a Negro, a hustler, one who is butch, and one who is nellie, and so on. They crack jokes while their hearts are breaking. William Friedkin directed Mart Crowley's adaptation of his own play. (Elgin; April 23.)

A Brief Vacation—Vittorio De Sica's final collaboration with the scriptwriter Cesare Zavattini was on this story of Clara (Florinda Bolkan), a Calabrian peasant who is a factory worker in Milan; resentful, beaten down to a morose stupor, she's also oppressed by her husband (Renato Salvatori), who uses her sexually as if she were a farm beast he owned. When she collapses and is sent to a sanatorium in northern Italy to be cured of tuberculosis, the schizoid picture leaves this working-class grimness behind; it's swoony romanticism from then on, almost like a dressy fantasy starring Elizabeth Taylor. Clara discovers art and spirituality, and she finds a frail, dewy-eyed lover (Daniel Quenaud) who drips nobility as only a narcissistic bad actor can. Sedately sentimental, with Adriana Asti playing a feverishly frisky, dying music-hall entertainer in the gallant-waif Piaf style. In Italian. (3/3/75) (Little Carnegie.)

Brother Sun, Sister Moon (1973)—The story of Francis of Assisi, directed by Franco Zeffirelli, with Graham Faulkner as Francis. (Elgin; April 27-28.)

Butterflies (1973)—Directed by Janusz Nasfeter. In Polish. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 29.)

Capone—With Ben Gazzara and Susan Blakely, directed by Steve Carver. (Loews Ciné.)

Catch-22 (1970)—A rational man vs. the Army. Joseph Heller's novel, adapted by Buck Henry, directed by Mike Nichols, and, most important, starring Alan Arkin. (Beekman; April 26.)

Charles Dead or Alive (1969)—Alain Tanner's Swiss film, made before his "La Salamandre." The hero is a fifty-year-old third-generation watchmaker who suddenly starts, on his firm's hundredth anniversary, to undo his soul as if he were taking a watch apart to see the works. Michel Simon's son, François,

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plays the hero very finely. In French. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 23.)

The Chase (1966)—Overripe melodrama about the South, directed by Arthur Penn—he regrets the film as a far-from-personal piece of work—and written nominally by Lillian Hellman, who has elsewhere disowned it. Marlon Brando, Jane Fonda, Janice Rule, Robert Redford, Robert Duvall. What was intended as a modest picture about some aimless people on an aimless Saturday night got purple and Thought Big. Produced by Sam Spiegel. (Elgin; April 29.)

Children of Paradise (1945)—A one-of-a-kind film: a sumptuous, romantic epic about the relations between theatre and life, written with wit by Jacques Prévert, and beautifully directed by Marcel Carné. Made during the Occupation but set in the Paris of Balzac, with Jean-Louis Barrault, the incomparable Arletty, Pierre Brasseur, Pierre Renoir, and Maria Casarès. In French. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 27.)

Chinatown—A thriller for grownups—more about greed than about blood-spilling—directed by Roman Polanski. John Huston plays a Biblical figure called Noah Cross; Faye Dunaway is a mysteriously widowed beauty called Mrs. Mulwray, who hires a private eye (Jack Nicholson) to solve the puzzle of her husband's death. Jack Nicholson's performances get better and more lissome every time. The film, set in the thirties, from a script by Robert Towne, is wickedly skillful and funny, and socially alert. (7/1/74) (R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 1. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema, and Symphony; through April 29.)

Chloé in the Afternoon (1972)—Will the squeamish, married hero (Bernard Verley) break down and go to bed with bohemian Chloé (Zouzou), or won't he? The author-director, Eric Rohmer, a specialist in the eroticism of nonsexual affairs, is a lapidary craftsman who works on a very small scale. This movie is, in its way, just about perfect, but it's minor, and so polished that it practically evaporates a half hour after it's over. In French. (Beekman; April 30.)

Circus Girls—Directed by Walter Guttman. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 28.)

The Clowns (1971)—Fellini, and a glory. His view of the world has always been that it is like the circus—a land of buffoons, of wounds that deliver no hurt. This is the film that exactly and unsentimentally states it. There is a peculiar tenebrous undertow in the quality of the color, as there is in circuses. In Italian. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 23.)

Cobra Woman (1944)—Camp classic, with Maria Montez as twins; Jon Hall, as thick as ever; and the cherished line "Gif me the cobra jools!" Robert Siodmak and George Waggner directed this heavenly absurdity. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; starting April 30.)

The Conversation (1974)—Written and directed by Francis Ford Coppola. The freezing case history of a wiretapping-and-bugging expert, wonderfully played by Gene Hackman as a man riddled with Catholic guilt and depleted by continual secrecy and self-deception. A terrifying depiction of a ransacked spirit. (4/15/74) (R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 1. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema, and Symphony; through April 29.)

Les Dames du Bois de Boulogne (1945)—Robert Bresson's film was defended at the time of its release by Jacques Becker, to his credit; not by many others. It is highly stylized, artificial on purpose, with a degree of photographic chic that Bresson later cast off. Cocteau wrote the dialogue; Maria Casarès plays a diabolical sophisticate called Hélène who is engaged in a revenge drama. The presence of Cocteau and Maria Casarès makes the film glamorous, histrionic, and not typical of Bresson, though glimmers of his reserved sensibility show through. In French. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 29.)

Darling (1965)—Julie Christie as a mod girl who doesn't feel "complete," in John Schlesinger's modish and spectacularly successful film about how empty we are. (Beekman; April 24. . . . ¶ Bleecker St. Cinema; April 28-29.)

Day for Night (1973)—François Truffaut made this tribute to the conventional movies that once gave him pleasure, and apparently still do. He himself plays a director who is shooting an American-financed film called "Meet Pamela," with Jean-Pierre Léaud, Jean-Pierre Aumont, Jacqueline Bisset, and Valentina Cortese. "Day for Night," unfortunately ordinary in its approach to character, is very childlike—filled with a deeply innocent love of the magic of moviemaking. There's not much to it, though it's graceful. In French. (10/15/73) (Beekman; April 27.)

Day of Wrath (1943)—It has been said that Carl Dreyer's art begins to unfold just at the point where most directors give up, and this psychological masterpiece, suggesting a fusion of Hawthorne and Kafka, is the proof. In 1623, the young second wife of an austere pastor desires his death because of her love for his son. When the pastor falls dead, she is tried for witchcraft. Accused of being a witch, she becomes what she and her accusers believe a witch to be. As all possibility of hope is stripped away from her, one's identification with her fear becomes unbearable; then Dreyer dissolves our terror as she is purified beyond even fear. The most powerful film ever made on the subject of witchcraft, it explores the erotic fears of the "witch" and her accusers. In Danish. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 30-May 1.)

The Deluge, Parts I and II (1974)—Directed by Jerzy Hoffman. In Polish. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 24.)

Deranged—A horror story, with Roberts Blossom. Directed by Jeff Gillen and Alan Ormsby. (Elgin; May 1.)

Diary of a Country Priest (1950)—Robert Bresson's masterly adaptation of the Georges Bernanos novel about the suffering of a young priest (Claude Laydu) whose faith is neither understood nor accepted by his parishioners. A film of great purity and intensity. In French. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 29.)

Dr. Strangelove (1964)—Stanley Kubrick's fantastically bold and abusive comedy, starring Peter Sellers, George C. Scott, Sterling Hayden, Keenan Wynn, and Slim Pickens. (Beekman; April 25. . . . ¶ Bleecker St. Cinema; April 30-May 1.)

Donkey Skin—Jacques Demy's Cinderella story about Catherine Deneuve dressed up in a donkey skin and working as a skivvy, but we all know she's Chanel No. 5 and the only person whose finger the prince's ring will fit. Wallpaper film, with pretty music by Michel Legrand. In French. (Regency; through April 26.)

Don't Cry with Your Mouth Full—With Annie Colé, directed by Pascal Thomas. In French. (Paris.)

Earthquake—L.A. gets it. The picture is swill, but it isn't a cheat, like "Airport 1975," which is cut-rate swill. This one is an entertaining marathon of Grade-A destruction effects, with B-picture stock characters spinning through it. Among them are Ava Gardner, the grimly resolute Charlton Heston, and Geneviève Bujold, whose witty style gives the picture its only touch of class. Mark Robson directed. (12/2/74) (New Embassy.)

Emmanuelle—With Sylvia Kristel and Alain Cuny, directed by Just Jaeckin. In French. X-rated. (Columbia II; through April 28. . . . ¶ Gramercy; through April 29.)

Eva (1962)—Jeanne Moreau as an elegant, heartless slut, and Stanley Baker as a born victim. Joseph Losey's film, set in Venice and Rome, was meddled with by the producers; what's left has flair and style (maybe too much of each), but the intentions aren't altogether clear. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 23-24.)

Executive Action (1973)—Feeble, insensitive fictionalization of how President Kennedy might have been the victim of a large-scale right-wing plot. It's a dodo-bird of a movie, the winner of the "Tora! Tora! Tora!" prize—in miniature—for 1973, with matchlessly dull performances from a cast that includes Burt Lancaster, Robert Ryan, and Will Geer. Dalton Trumbo wrote the script from a story by Donald Freed and Mark Lane; David Miller directed. (11/19/73) (Elgin; April 30.)

The Exile (1947)—The title is all too apropos: Max Ophuls had many sad days in Hollywood, and this piece of costumed theatrics filled a number of them. Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., was the producer, the writer, and the gymnastic star, and Maria Montez, Paule Croset, Henry Daniell, and Nigel Bruce appear with him. The cinematographer, Franz Planer, worked with Ophuls in happier times. From the novel "His Majesty, the King," by Cosmo Hamilton. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 25.)

Fallen Angel (1945)—There was a brief period when Otto Preminger made well-paced, engaging melodramas, and this is one of them; it isn't in the class of his "Laura," but it's tolerable, in a tawdry sort of way. Dana Andrews arrives in a small California town with a dollar to his name, gets an itch for a money-loving waitress (Linda Darnell, so it's easy to sympathize with him), and marries the local rich girl (Alice Faye) to get the dough to win the waitress. But his sordid plan misfires: the waitress is murdered, and he becomes the prime suspect. Dana Andrews is saturnine and convincing, and although Alice Faye isn't altogether comfortable playing Brahms on a church organ and poring over Proust, the good cast includes Charles Bickford, Bruce Cabot, Jimmy Conlin, John Carradine, Anne Revere, and Percy Kilbride. Harry Kleiner adapted Marty Holland's novel. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; April 28.)

FELLINI SATYRICON (1970)—Fellini's big pagan ball. Cautionary images of depravity and apocalypse that seem to come out of the imagination of a Catholic schoolboy—leering cripples, fat people with hideous grins, and so on. Monotonous. In Italian. (Elgin; April 24-26. . . . ¶ Beekman; May 1.)

FIRESIGN FUNNIES—Performances by the Firesign Theatre, including "Martian Space Party." (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 26.)

THE FIRE WITHIN (1963)—A neglected small masterwork. A Scott Fitzgerald-like young man in Paris seeks out a variety of old friends before putting a bullet in his heart. A beautiful picture, thanks to the acting of Maurice Ronet and the direction of Louis Malle. In French. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; May 1.)

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT (1940)—Hitchcock appears to have concocted this spy thriller out of all the breathtaking climaxes he'd been hoarding; there's the assassination with the gun concealed in a newsman's camera, the Dutch windmill going against the wind, and a tremendous finale aboard a transatlantic plane from London on the very day war is declared. The plot that links all this is barely functional, and the jaunty reporter-hero (Joel McCrea) is held down a bit when he has to attend to the ever-busy heroine (Laraine Day), but the movie is intermittently first-rate, and the topnotch supporting cast includes George Sanders, Albert Basserman, Herbert Marshall, Edmund Gwenn, Martin Kosleck, Eduardo Cianelli, Barbara Pepper, and Robert Benchley, who also had a hand in the dialogue. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; through April 26.)

FORSAKING ALL OTHERS (1934)—Joan Crawford appeared in very few good movies (and this triangle picture isn't one of them), but her thirties melodramas are such lavish, tinselled toys that they can be terrible and still be hypnotic. Swathed in Adrian dresses and flanked by Clark Gable and Robert Montgomery, she stares at us solemnly, directly—as if challenging us to come to terms with her overwrought modern-woman's problems. Here, she's midway between the lively flapper excitement that made her a star (she used to look sexed to the gills) and the agonized, toothachy concentration that became her style for dramatic acting in the forties. W. S. Van Dyke directed the mediocre material; with Rosalind Russell and Billie Burke. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; April 29.)

THE FOUR MUSKETEERS—Richard Lester's cheerful solution of how to turn "The Three Musketeers," which ran four hours, into a manageable movie: he simply made two films of it. This is the second. Very likable, with Michael York as the extra musketeer, Roy Kinnear as the trudging dogsbody of the three others (Richard Chamberlain, Frank Finlay, Oliver Reed), Raquel Welch, and splendid comic performances by Faye Dunaway, caparisoned with ringlets, and, of all people, Charlton Heston (Cardinal Richelieu). Written by George MacDonald Fraser, author of the "Flashman" series. (3/31/75) (Waverly, and New Yorker. . . . ¶ 72nd Street East; through April 29.)

FREEBIE AND THE BEAN—James Caan and Alan Arkin. There's a beating or a killing or, at least, a yelling scene every couple of minutes in this spoofy slapstick farce, directed by Richard Rush and written by Robert Kaufman. It was conceived in the pre-Watergate Nixon era, and the heroes—cop buddies—seem to have a license to maim and slaughter people. With Valerie Harper, Loretta Swit, Linda Marsh, Jack Kruschen, Mike Kellin, Alex Rocco, and Christopher Morley as the transvestite. (Playboy; starting April 30.)

FUNNY LADY—The moviemakers weren't just going to make a sequel to "Funny Girl"—they were going to kill us. (And they wanted to outdo "Cabaret," besides.) As Fanny Brice, Barbra Streisand is no longer human; she's like a bitchy female impersonator imitating Barbra Streisand. She's in beautiful voice, but her singing is too terrific; it's no longer singing, it's strident overdramatization that turns a song into a big number. The picture is overproduced and badly edited, with a forties-movie-heartbreak plot. A great deal of talent has been badly used, though James Caan has some good scenes as scrubby, anxious Billy Rose, and Streisand is charming in the wittily staged "I Found a Million Dollar Baby in a Five and Ten Cent Store." Ray Stark produced; Herbert Ross directed. The new songs are by Kander and Ebb. (3/17/75) (Loews Tower East, and Loews Orpheum.)

THE GARDEN OF THE FINZI-CONTINIS (1970)—Vittorio De Sica's lyric evocation of a vanished group of people (the cultivated, aristocratic Jewish-Italian landowners) and a vanished mood. Based on Giorgio Bassani's semi-autobiographical novel, the film records how Giorgio, a middle-class outsider (Lino Capolicchio), is drawn into the decaying, enchanted world of the Finzi-Continis by the imperious, contrary Micòl (Dominique Sanda); she and her languid brother (Helmut Berger) are spoiled, beautiful people without the will to save themselves. Perhaps the only film that records the halfhearted anti-Jewish measures of the Mussolini period—which were, however, sufficient to wipe out the Finzi-Continis and all they represented. In Italian. (Elgin; April 27-28.)

THE GODFATHER, PART II—The daring of Part II is that it enlarges the scope and deepens the meaning of the first film. Visually, Part II is far more complexly beautiful than the first, just as it's thematically richer, more shadowed, fuller. The completed work, contrasting the early manhood of Vito (Robert De Niro) with the life of Michael, his inheritor (Al Pacino), is an epic vision of the corruption of America; this is a bicentennial picture that doesn't insult the intelligence. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola; the script is by Coppola and Mario Puzo. (12/23/74) (Paramount.)

GONE WITH THE WIND (1939)—Nearly four hours of Vivien Leigh, Clark Gable, and thousands of others. Parts of them, that is. With the widening of the image, the actors have been reduced to torsos. (Music Hall; April 24-30.)

THE GRANDE BOUFFE (1973)—Slang for the big blowout, the grand guzzle. A funny, grim parable about the well-off and Rubens-like of the world. Members of a hermetic houseparty, ruined by having no sense of consequence, set out joyfully to eat themselves to death. With Marcello Mastroianni, Michel Piccoli, Ugo Tognazzi, and Philippe Noiret. Directed by Marco Ferreri. In French. (9/24/73) (Elgin; April 24-26.)

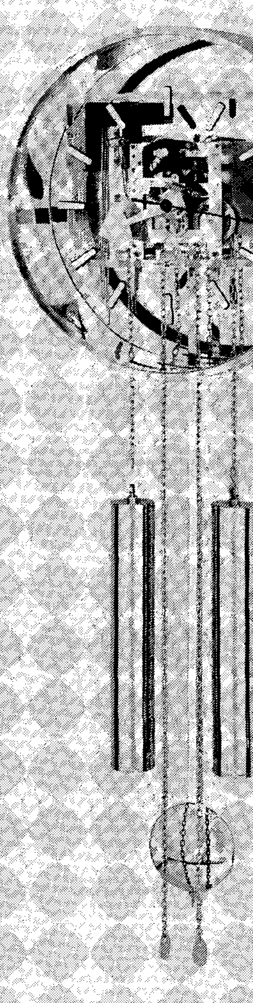
THE GREAT WALDO PEPPER—One-hundred-percent-pure-plastic adolescent male fantasy. It's set in the twenties, with Robert Redford as a First World War aviator who spends some time barnstorming in the Midwest and then goes to Hollywood, where he lives out his dream of fighting the No. 1 Imperial German ace. William Goldman's coldhearted, clever script and the director George Roy Hill's fresh-painted storytelling almost amount to a style: total inauthenticity. (3/24/75) (Murray Hill, and 86th St. East.)

HARRY & TONTO—Directed by Paul Mazursky and written by him with Josh Greenfeld. Harry (Art Carney) is a limping old man with a buoyant spirit who buys cheap food for himself and good liver for his cat, a heavyset marmalade companion called Tonto. The old Lear has three disappointing children strung across the country, whom he visits after the demolition of his one-room flat. He eventually decides they represent a rope on his liberty. The narrative sounds sentimental, but the film isn't. (8/26/74) (Festival; starting April 25.)

THE HEARTBREAK KID (1972)—One of the rare current comedies with a director's style and personality. Elaine May finds her comic tone (befuddled skepticism) and scores a first besides—no other American woman director has ever directed her daughter in a leading role. Jeannie Berlin plays the voluptuously giddy bride, whose groom (Charles Grodin) falls in love with a cool American dreamgirl (Cybill Shepherd) three days after the wedding. From Neil Simon's script, based on a Bruce Jay Friedman story. (Beekman; April 29.)

HEARTS AND MINDS—A documentary about the United States involvement in Vietnam, di-

See what makes it tick.



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rected by Peter Davis. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Cinema I.)

The Hour of the Furnaces (1968)—An attempt to use film as a revolutionary weapon. A didactic, explosive, semi-documentary on Peronism and the necessity to create national consciousness in Argentina and other Latin-American countries. By the Argentine director Fernando Solanas. In Spanish. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 28.)

Husbands (1970)—Three actors (John Cassavetes, Peter Falk, and Ben Gazzara) playing three suburban husbands in a semi-improvised movie directed by Cassavetes. The actors have occasional intense and affecting moments, going through emotions that they set off in each other, but Cassavetes is the sort of man who is dedicated to stripping people of their pretenses and laying bare their souls. Inevitably, the results are agonizingly banal. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 24.)

The Invitation—With Jean-Luc Bideau and Michel Robin, directed by Claude Goretta. In French. (Regency; starting April 27.)

Isn't Life Wonderful (1924)—D. W. Griffith, who, in addition to everything else, had an extraordinary feeling for the documentary aspects of film, shot this story about what war does to people in Germany after the First World War. A pioneer work of neorealism, which influenced the Italian films made after the Second World War, it was perhaps Griffith's last great burst of creative energy. The stars are Carol Dempster (at her best, which is still not overpowering) and Neil Hamilton. The locations include Berlin. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 26.)

King of Hearts (1967)—Philippe de Broca makes a lulling and rather winsome period comedy about a 1918 soldier in an evacuated village now inhabited only by zoo animals and lunatics in fancy dress. With Alan Bates. In French and English. (D. W. Griffith; April 23.)

Lacombe, Lucien—About a boy who has an empty space where feelings beyond the purely instinctual are expected to be. The time is 1944, and the boy—a French peasant—goes to work each day hunting down and torturing people for the Gestapo. The director, Louis Malle, casts as Lucien a teen-age country boy (Pierre Blaise) who can respond to events with his own innocence, apathy, and animal shrewdness. Malle's gamble is that the cameras will discover what the artist's imagination can't, and, steadily, startlingly, the gamble pays off. Without ever mentioning the subject of innocence and guilt, this extraordinary film, in its calm, dispassionate way, addresses it on a deeper level than any other movie. With Aurore Clément as a Parisian Jewish girl, Holger Löwenadler as her meticulously cultivated father. In French. (9/30/74) (Beekman; April 29.)

Law and Disorder—While you're watching this comedy about the frustrations and foul-ups of New Yorkers Carroll O'Connor and Ernest Borgnine as they try to protect their families by organizing an auxiliary-police unit, you can tell how the scenes were meant to play and why they don't. You can see that the gifted Czech director Ivan Passer doesn't have the unconscious equipment for the look and feel of ordinary American life, and that he is trying to strike a compromise between his feelings and the demands of the American marketing system—and satisfying neither. O'Connor has some fine restrained moments, and Alan Arbus contributes an entertaining bit, but the film is a painful failure. Passer is trying to do the sort of thing that gets louder laughs than his own kind of comedy; it is the case of an artist trying to do what clods can do better. (10/21/74) (Playboy; through April 29.)

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Lenny—The earnest Bob Fosse film starring Dustin Hoffman is for audiences who want to believe that Lenny Bruce was a saintly gadfly who was martyred for having lived before their time. Hoffman makes a serious, honorable try, but he's the wrong kind of actor to play Bruce. Hoffman is a nice boy; Bruce was uncompromisingly not nice. The film, from a weak script by Julian Barry, accepts the facile, youth-audience-flattering view that Bruce's motivating force was to make people well, and, having swallowed that, can only defuse his humor. So when you listen to Hoffman doing Bruce's shticks you don't even feel like laughing. Valerie Perrine is touching as Honey, and Gary Morton has a fine bit as the type of comic who knew how to keep his public happy. (11/18/74) (72nd Street East; starting April 30.)

Lola Montès (1955)—Max Ophuls' command of baroque style and of comic detail transforms the real-life story of a courtesan's decline into a circus trapeze artist—a story fairly trite in itself—into a work of amazing and moving density. With Martine Carol, Anton Walbrook, Peter Ustinov. In French, and in its full form. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 25.)

Long Day's Journey Into Night (1962)—The best film ever made from an O'Neill play, and it's O'Neill's greatest, most exalted play—one that takes an American family to mythic heights. Katharine Hepburn, Ralph Richardson, Jason Robards, and Dean Stockwell are the quartet. The complete film runs a hundred and seventy minutes; unfortunately, a cut version has been scheduled here. The cutting (thirty-four minutes are omitted) seriously damages the play's structure and removes many of Robards' crucial scenes. Sidney Lumet directed; Boris Kaufman did the cinematography. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 27.)

The Long Goodbye (1973)—Robert Altman kisses off the private-eye form as gracefully as "Beat the Devil" finished off the cycle of the international-intrigue thriller. Less accidental than "Beat the Devil," it's just about as funny, though quicker-witted and dreamier, in soft, mellow color and volatile images. Based on Raymond Chandler's book, the picture stars Elliott Gould as Marlowe; thinner and lither, he gives his best performance yet, as a wryly forlorn man, still driving a 1948 Lincoln Continental and trying to behave like Bogart. With Nina van Pallandt, Sterling Hayden, and Mark Rydell. (10/22/73) (Beekman; April 23.)

Love in the Afternoon (1957)—Wide-eyed Audrey Hepburn as the Parisian schoolgirl whom Elisabeth Bergner played in "Ariane." A student of the cello, this Ariane falls in love with an aging American roué ensconced in the Paris Ritz—Gary Cooper, looking as if he knows how unappealing he is in the role. The director, Billy Wilder, and his co-scenarist, I. A. L. Diamond, have made her the daughter of a detective (Maurice Chevalier), who is then hired by Cooper to investigate her. It's all meant to be airy and bubbly, but it's obvious, overextended (two hours plus), and overproduced. It was shot in France, and much of it is location work, but the art director, Alexander Trauner, built the first floor of the Paris Conservatoire in a studio, as well as the second floor of the Ritz full-scale, with actual, operating elevators. For the performance of "Tristan and Isolde," Wilder engaged nine hundred and sixty extras in full evening dress. At the end, there's a fine view of a smoking, chugging locomotive in a splendid, vaulted railroad station—and for a moment one wonders if this, too, is a set. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 28.)

Mean Streets (1973)—A true original, and a triumph of personal filmmaking. What Martin Scorsese has done with the experience of growing up in New York's Little Italy has a thicker-textured rot than we have ever had in an American movie, and a riper sense of evil. With Harvey Keitel as Charlie, Robert De Niro as Johnny Boy, and Amy Robinson as Teresa. (10/8/73) (Beekman; April 27.)

The Middle of the World—One of the best, most innovative films about the nature of passionate love to come out of Europe since "Scenes from a Marriage" and the pictures of Eric Rohmer. This is a film of tremendous simplicity with a complex intellectual underlay, directed by Alain Tanner and written by him with the English art critic and novelist John Berger. (They did "La Salamandre" together, and Tanner made "Charles Dead or Alive" and "Le Retour d'Afrique.") The hero (Philippe Léotard) is a married engineer who is being manipulated into becoming a local politician; the heroine (Olimpia Carlisi) is an Italian barmaid. Opposites meet, and the film is a record of the two characters' ability to change. Lucid and thoughtful, shot in long takes without cuts. And also very funny at times, and truly erotic. A trailbreaker. In French. (3/31/75) (68th St. Playhouse.)

Minnie and Moskowitz (1971)—John Cassavetes built this movie on a small conceit—a love affair between two people who are wildly unsuited to each other—and it doesn't work. The picture drivels on about the joys of spontaneity, while Gena Rowlands and Seymour Cassel remain embarrassingly wrong for each other. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 24. . . . ¶ Embassy 72nd St.; starting April 30.)

Monty Python and the Holy Grail—With Graham Chapman, directed by Terry Gilliam and Terry Jones. (Cinema II; starting April 27.)

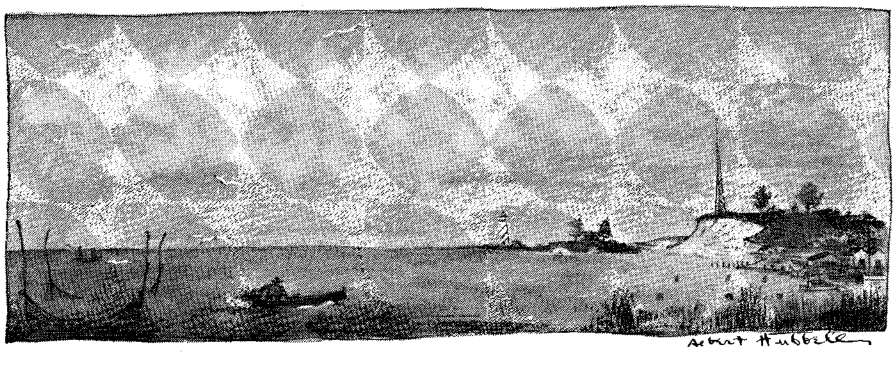
Morgan! (1966)—An unusual movie about an anarchistic left-wing misfit rebel (David Warner). The movie (directed by Karel Reisz, from David Mercer's TV play) often seems to be out of control as it teeters along, sometimes presenting its hero as cute and funny, other times as tragic and in pain. With Vanessa Redgrave. (Beekman; April 25.)

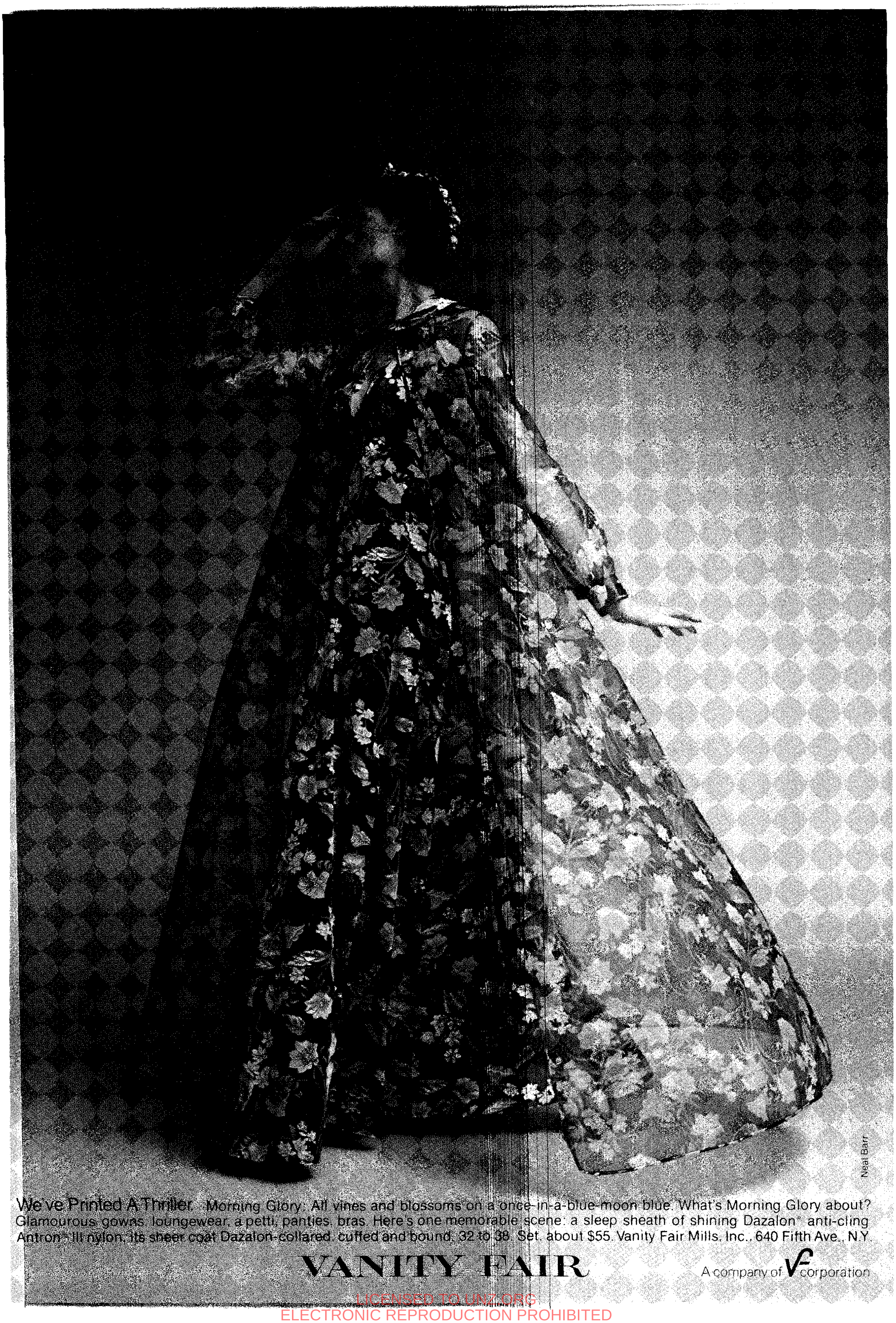
Murder on the Orient Express—This all-star version of an Agatha Christie antiquity is utterly inoffensive, and audiences appear to be so hungry for this sort of entertainment that maybe it hardly matters that it isn't very good. Vanessa Redgrave, Rachel Roberts, and Ingrid Bergman are standouts in a cast that includes John Gielgud, Lauren Bacall, Wendy Hiller, Sean Connery, and Albert Finney as Hercule Poirot. Sidney Lumet directed. (12/9/74) (Cinema Village, and Juliet 2. . . . ¶ Embassy 72nd St.; through April 29. . . . ¶ Olympia; starting April 30.)

Murmur of the Heart (1971)—An exhilarating high comedy—Louis Malle's portrait of the artist as a young dog is also probably the wittiest study of French bourgeois life. With Lea Massari as the enchantingly permissive mother. In French. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; May 1.)

Negatives (1968)—Peter McEnery, Diane Cilento, and Glenda Jackson in a well-acted first film directed by Peter Medak. Medak was born in Hungary in 1937 and left for England during the 1956 uprising; he has gone on to make "A Day in the Death of Joe Egg." (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 29.)

The New Land (1973)—At the end of "The Emigrants," the viewer wanted to go on and discover if the survivors of the mid-nineteenth-century emigration from Sweden found what they had hoped for. In this second half, the master director Jan Troell shows what happened to them in Minnesota. Together, the two halves offer the pleasures of a rich, overflowing epic novel. Max von Sydow and Liv Ullmann have never been better—that's saying a lot. With Eddie Axberg and Monica

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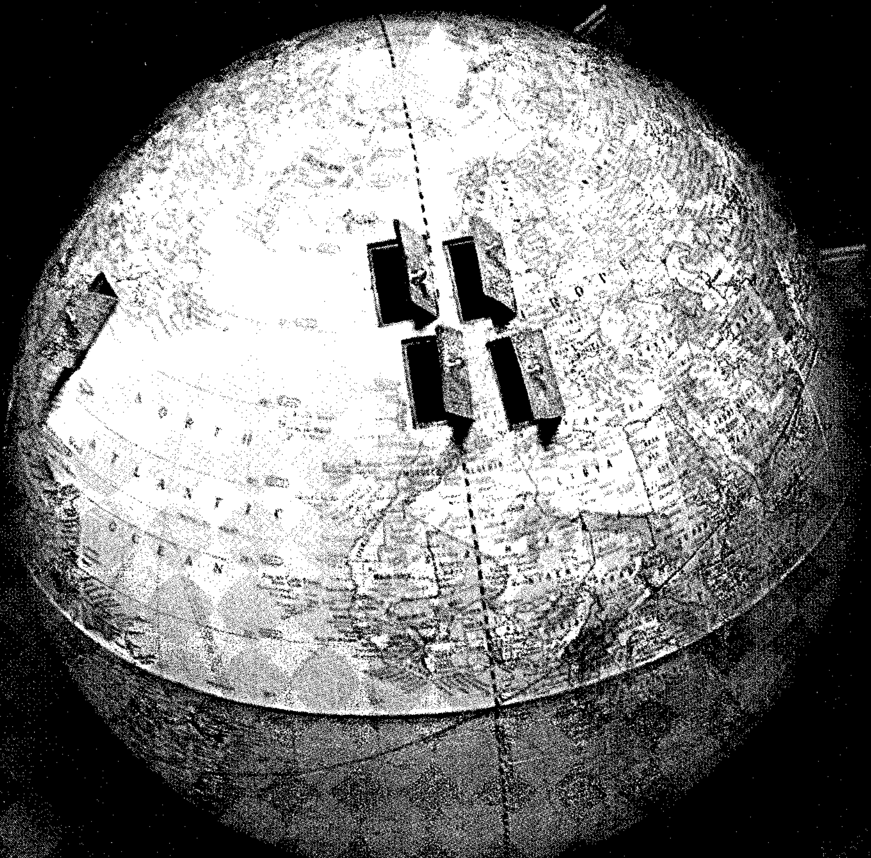

DOOR OPENERS.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Zetterlund. In Swedish. (10/15/73) (St. Marks Cinema; through April 29.)

Painters Painting (1973)—Painters talking, mostly, often combining the knowledgeable with the dopey. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 26-27.)

The Passenger—Antonioni's film about an estranged London TV news reporter trying to flee the coop of himself. Everything has staled for him—work and personal life both—and Antonioni makes, for the first time in his career, a clear causal connection between a character's situation and his environment. The reporter is on the track of a story in a remote part of Africa. He seizes the chance to exchange his identity for a dead man's, and takes on the dead man's slowly revealed undercover missions, which endow him with political purpose. The film is psychologically complex, dwelling on parallel themes about disjuncture and ambiguity, but also declarative in a way that is unique in Antonioni's work; as well as that, it is a picture of astonishing aesthetic beauty and technical innovation. Jack Nicholson, as the reporter, gives a performance that is a marvel of insight about a man whose chances are running out. Maria Schneider exquisitely plays a soft-voiced, attentive stranger whom he meets in his new identity. (4/14/75) (Baronet.)

The Passion of Anna (1970)—Ingmar Bergman studies the ebb and flow of spirit in four people living on an island. The moral landscape is totally modern, with barely a modern object in sight. With Liv Ullmann, Bibi Andersson, Max von Sydow, and Erland Josephson. In Swedish. (Beekman; May 1.)

The Prisoner of Second Avenue—Jack Lemmon, as a New York advertising executive, gets fired, feels worthless, and has a nervous breakdown; Anne Bancroft is his devoted wife. Vaguely about urban despair, full of bad jokes. Melvin Frank has directed the movie version of Neil Simon's sitcom in his usual sagging, fifties style, but probably there isn't a filmmaker in the world who could substantially improve this picture except by throwing out the play altogether. (3/10/75) (Sutton.)

Private Lives (1931)—Early talkie attempt at glittering theatrical sophistication, and, somehow, M-G-M brought it off this time. This version of the Noël Coward play was made soon after the play came out, and perhaps the play's style and excitement carries the cast along. Norma Shearer isn't so bad, and Robert Montgomery is very, very good. It was a dazzling success. Sidney Franklin directed; with Reginald Denny. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; April 27.)

The Producers (1968)—Satire of the theatre, with Zero Mostel as a producer who sells twenty-five thousand per cent of a play, intending to produce a flop so that he won't have to pay the backers anything. Some of it is very funny, but Mel Brooks, who wrote and directed, doesn't develop the ideas. With Dick Shawn and Gene Wilder, whose whining, strangled-voice bit is almost a shtick of genius. (Quad Cinema; through April 29.)

Raven's End (1964)—Bo Widerberg's simple, unromanticized film (made long before "Elvira Madigan"), re-creating the thirties in Sweden. The picture is about a poor family, headed by an ex-salesman full of hopeless airs. The human detail of the film, full of visual asides and spurts of conviviality, is a bit like Renoir's. In Swedish. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 30.)

The Reincarnation of Peter Proud—With Michael Sarrazin and Jennifer O'Neill, directed by J. Lee Thompson. (R.K.O. 59th St. Twin 1, and R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 2; starting April 25 at 6.)

Report to the Commissioner—Another entry in the "French Connection" sweepstakes, this one smartened up with the "Serpico" theme, but to no avail. It's a slovenly production, and the suspense never gets going. Michael Moriarty plays the hippie undercover detective destroyed by his blundering, callous superiors in the New York City Police Department. Moriarty is required to fall apart at the end, but he can't wait for the climactic collapse, and he begins disintegrating before you've settled in your seat. With Yaphet Kotto, giving a respectable performance, against all odds, and a twittering blond ingénue, Susan Blakely, who is supposed to be a hot-shot narc. Adapted from James Mills' novel; directed by Milton Katselas. (2/10/75) (Thalia. . . . ¶ Greenwich; through April 29.)

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Rosebud—Thriller about the Middle East, with no great thrills and no thoughtfulness at all. It has an international cast of actors who speak English as though they were dolphins of high degree who had learned the language from phonograph records. Five girl teenagers, four of them heirs to fortunes, are hijacked by an Arab terrorist under the orders of a loopy Muslim-converted Englishman called Sloat (Richard Attenborough). He is foiled by Peter O'Toole, using the cover of a job on *Newsweek* to disguise the fact that he is working for the C.I.A. Moral confusion abounds in the film; Otto Preminger, who directed, has a much finer intelligence than this. The fault lies mostly with the inane screenplay, which was adapted by Erik Lee Preminger, Otto's son, from a best-seller by Joan Hemingway, Ernest's granddaughter, and Paul Bonnecarrère. (4/7/75) (Plaza. . . . ¶ Greenwich; starting April 30, tentative.)

Rosemary's Baby (1968)—Mia Farrow, John Cassavetes, and Ruth Gordon in a gothic-gynecological horror film, some of it shot in the expensive brown depths of the Dakota, on Central Park West. Directed by Roman Polanski: funny, horrible, spiked with knowingness and thriller twinges. (Beekman; April 26.)

La Salamandre (1971)—A Swiss film (made in French, with English subtitles), directed by Alain Tanner from a script that he wrote in collaboration with the English art critic and novelist John Berger. There are three main characters: an imperishable little lizard of a girl called Rosemonde (Bulle Ogier), a huge-framed, goofy-looking journalist named Pierre, with a lopsided face and a hopeful view of life (Jean-Luc Bideau), and a low-key, lovable writer called Paul, with a lugubrious mustache like a Victorian bather's (Jacques Denis). The film is full of intellect and gay clarity. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 23.)

Sally of the Sawdust (1925)—D. W. Griffith directed W. C. Fields in this film, which was Fields' first success with the movie public. It's an adaptation of Fields' stage hit "Poppy," and he plays Professor Eustace McGargle, the con man with a heart of gold. (Fields appeared in a sound version of the same material in 1936.) Griffith was working for a studio and didn't have control of this production (nor much dexterity at this type of comedy). It doesn't have a great deal to recommend it besides Fields, although the cast includes Alfred Lunt. Sally is the unexciting Carol Dempster. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 27.)

The Scoundrel (1935)—The young Noël Coward acted in this Ben Hecht-Charles MacArthur movie, playing a dissolute publisher seething with self-dislike and charm. The picture is very witty for its first two-thirds. Hecht and MacArthur had the notion of making a film that would confound cow-lidded moviegoing taste by taking the form of a violently suave fairy tale. The film is a wonderful exercise in the debonair, with a kind of crippled poetry about it. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; April 27.)

Shadow of a Doubt (1942)—The setting is quiet, clean, sleepy Santa Rosa, California; it is invaded by a psychopathic killer (Joseph Cotten), who comes to visit his unsuspecting and adoring relatives. Alfred Hitchcock considers this fine thriller (from a script principally by Thornton Wilder) to be his best American film, and he may be right. With Patricia Collinge, Teresa Wright, Hume Cronyn, Henry Travers. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; through April 26.)

Shampoo—Warren Beatty, as a Beverly Hills hairdresser, in a sex roundelay set in the Beatles sixties of miniskirts and strobe lights. Exploited for gags, this yummy idea for a movie might have turned into no more than a saucy romp, but the way it has been done, the joke expands the more you think about it. The film opens on Election Eve, November 4, 1968, and ends the day after Nixon's and Agnew's victory; the people whirling in and out of bed include Julie Christie, Goldie Hawn, Jack Warden, Lee Grant, Tony Bill, and Carrie Fisher. This sophisticated farce, directed by Hal Ashby from a script by Robert Towne and Beatty (who is also the producer), may be put down as frivolous just because it really isn't. It's a very uncompromising film, and it's going to cause dissension. (2/17/75) (Coronet.)

Sleeper (1973)—A modern slapstick-comedy classic, directed by and starring Woody Allen. Set two hundred years in the future, it's the most stable and sustained of his films, with a clean visual style and an elegant design. It's a very even work, with no thudding bad lines and no low stretches, but it doesn't have the loose, magic highs of some of his other films. You laugh all the way through and come out smiling and perfectly happy, but you're not driven crazy—not really turned on the way his messier movies can turn you on. With Diane Keaton. (12/31/73) (Beekman; April 23.)

The Slip-Up (1971)—Directed by Jan Lommicki. In Polish. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 25.)

Stavisky—Alain Resnais' death song for thirties elegance, featuring a silver Hispano-Suiza, an Art Deco diamond necklace, baskets of white hothouse flowers, and silvery-white skies. The film seems to be a reverie on façades and contrasts, in which the swindler-charmer Stavisky (Jean-Paul Belmondo), who hides his past, is paired with his friend Baron Raoul (Charles Boyer), whose character is enriched by his background. Resnais directs as if vitality would be a sin against art, and the characters are no more than emblems. He has a beautiful technique, but it's not an expressive technique. This is an icy, high-minded white-telephone movie. The script is by Jorge Semprun. In French. (1/20/75) (Cinema II; through April 26. . . . ¶ 8th St. Playhouse; starting April 30.)

The Stepford Wives—The first women's-lib gothic—hardly the landmark the world has been waiting for. Besides, it's so tastefully tame that there's no suspense. Taken from an Ira Levin novel that might have been written by a computer, it's about the encroaching horror of suburban blandness; in this account, the responsibility for suburban women's becoming overgroomed deadheads, obsessed with waxed, antiseptic households, is placed totally on the men. Katharine Ross plays the young New Yorker who moves to Stepford and discovers that the wives have been robotized by their husbands. Written by William Goldman and directed by Bryan Forbes, the picture is literal in a way that seems a wasting disease. With Paula Prentiss, Nanette Newman, Peter Masterson, and Patrick O'Neal. (2/24/75) (Playboy; through April 29. . . . ¶ Gramercy; starting April 30.)

The Sting (1973)—Paul Newman, Robert Redford, and director George Roy Hill trying to recapture the box-office glow of "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid." This time, the happy twosome are cardsharps and swindlers of the thirties: the mood isn't as coyly lyrical as before—the first blush of their romance has faded. It's a visually claustrophobic, mechanically plotted movie that's meant to be a roguishly charming entertainment, and many people probably consider it just that. With Robert Shaw as the stiff-necked menace. (12/31/73) (Olympia; through April 29.)

Story of a Love Affair (1950)—The first feature film by Michelangelo Antonioni, with Lucia Bosè. In Italian. (Cinema Studio; starting April 30.)

Suddenly, Last Summer (1959)—One of Tennessee Williams' feverous fantasies, padded out by Joseph L. Mankiewicz, the director, and by Williams and Gore Vidal, who did the screenplay. They should never have allowed the audience so much time to think about what's going on: the short play turns into a ludicrous, lumbering horror movie. Katharine Hepburn is rather amusing as the Southern-belle dragon lady whose homosexual poet-son, Sebastian, was killed and partly eaten by the North African boys he'd preyed upon, and Elizabeth Taylor is her distraught niece, whom she's trying to get lobotomized so that the girl won't be able to tell the story. Taylor works hard at her big monologue, trying to give us the shudders, but Mankiewicz has delayed her revelations too long. Montgomery Clift, in possibly his worst performance, is

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the dim-witted neurosurgeon who can't seem to get anything into his eminent head. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 27.)

Sunday Bloody Sunday (1971)—John Schlesinger directed this complex, remarkably modulated study of the breakup of two love affairs, from a screenplay by Penelope Gilliatt. An unusual film—perhaps a classic. With Glenda Jackson, Peter Finch, and Murray Head. (Elgin; April 23.)

The Super Cops (1974)—With Ron Leibman and David Selby, directed by Gordon Parks. (Playboy; starting April 30.)

Ten Little Indians—The third remake of the Agatha Christie classic, with Oliver Reed, Elke Sommer, and Richard Attenborough. Directed by Peter Collinson. (Eastside Cinema, and U. A. East.)

The Terminal Man—One of those errors-of-science thrillers; it's an even worse error of moviemaking. Pitifully miscast, George Segal runs around stabbing people uncontrollably. Mike Hodges, who directed, also is guilty of the adaptation of the Michael Crichton novel. Joan Hackett plays a soulful-eyed doctor. (Elgin; April 30.)

To Be or Not to Be (1942)—A strangely tasteless anti-Nazi comedy melodrama, crudely effective at times. The stars are Carole Lombard and Jack Benny, bizarrely cast as a famous Polish actress and her actor-husband; the plot involves actors disguising themselves as Nazis in order to foil the Nazis. Directed by Ernst Lubitsch, who is far off his usual delicate style. With Robert Stack, Lionel Atwill, Stanley Ridges, and Felix Bressart. It was Lombard's last film; two weeks after completing it, she was killed in a plane crash while on a tour to sell defense bonds. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; April 29.)

Tokyo Story (1953)—One of the most honored of all Japanese films, directed by Yasujiro Ozu, who has made a gentle-natured masterpiece of wonderful complexity out of a simple story about elderly parents who go to visit their grown-up children in Tokyo and find that the children have no interest in them. In Japanese. (Beekman; April 28.)

Tommy—The famous rock opera composed and sung by The Who, turned into a clamorous film by Ken Russell. Like many mindless satires, it fallaciously respects and exploits what it seeks to criticize. For instance, it pretends to be severe about the false idols of our era, but it is exceedingly religious about show biz and success. Lots of psychedelic shocks and comic-strip effects. Ann-Margret is appealing when she doesn't have to fling herself about. Roger Daltrey plays Tommy. (4/7/75) (Ziegfeld.)

Touch and Go—With Michel Piccoli, Marlène Jobert, and Michael York, directed by Philippe de Broca. In French. (Reviewed in this issue.) (D. W. Griffith; starting April 24.)

The Towering Inferno—Disaster blockbuster, with each scene of someone horribly in flames presented as a feat for the audience's delectation. These incendiary deaths and the falls from high up in the hundred-and-thirty-eight-floor tallest skyscraper in the world are the film's only feats. Paul Newman and Steve McQueen mutter heroic sentiments, and Faye Dunaway manages to look goddessy-beautiful through it all. John Guillermin directed, Irwin Allen produced, Sterling Silliphant wrote the series of bloopers that make up the script. (12/30/74) (Trans-Lux East.)

The Trip (1967)—Roger Corman takes his hero, Peter Fonda (playing a TV-commercials director who lives in Los Angeles), on an extended LSD trip, during which he is reborn. Fonda's hallucinations provide Corman with opportunities to imitate a great many styles of film, and to introduce what appear to be bits of his own earlier horror movies. With Dennis Hopper, Susan Strasberg, and Bruce Dern. (Elgin; May 1.)

2001: A Space Odyssey (1968)—Stanley Kubrick's prophetic myth of ourselves thirty-three years later. He introduces the idea of an extraterrestrial intelligence that much diminishes mankind's small achievement in the stumbling upward from apedom in the direction of computers. "2001" is some sort of great film, and often appallingly funny. (Music Hall; starting May 1.)

Ulysses (1967)—An act of homage to Joyce's novel that is reasonably successful in providing a surface map of the comings and goings in town and "Nighttown" but that lacks the sensuality of the novel's prose. Joyce gives us the drama within Stephen's consciousness; the Joseph Strick film stays on the outside, and so Leopold Bloom, who is easier to represent, takes over. With Maurice Roeves as Stephen, Milo O'Shea as Bloom, and Barbara Jefford as Molly. (Beekman; April 30.)

Whirlpool (1950)—A real stinker, with Richard Conte as a psychoanalyst whose wife (Gene Tierney) is an insomniac kleptomaniac with a father fixation. The obtuse Conte doesn't spot any of this, but a thieving, bug-eyed hypnotist (José Ferrer) reads her mind fast, and starts throwing her into trances. He decides to throttle an old flame of his and put the blame on the sticky-fingered Tierney. The plot goes from confusion to chaos when he arranges an ironclad alibi for himself: he has his gall bladder removed just a few hours before the murder. The scriptwriters, Ben Hecht (hiding in shame under the pseudonym Lester Barstow) and Andrew Solt, must have really had it in for the director, Otto Preminger. Others swimming in this stew, taken from a Guy Endore novel, are Charles Bickford, Constance Collier, and Barbara O'Neil. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; April 28.)

White Savage (1943)—Jon Hall, Maria Montez, and Sabu, with their marvellous mix of accents, having implausible adventures in the South Sea islands; they all sound just as they did in "Arabian Nights." The writers carelessly put a character named Tamara in the story; the way it works out, they have other, serious-minded characters saying things like "Well, how are you feeling today, Tamara?" Arthur Lubin directed this innocent low camp. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; starting April 30.)

Woman in the Dunes (1964)—An excellent Japanese film by Hiroshi Teshigahara, if one can assume that your sympathies will not be shaken by a taxing concentration on sand and sand-covered bodies, and by an alien cast of mind about erotic parables. In Japanese. (Beekman; April 28.)

A Woman Under the Influence—The writer-director John Cassavetes is under the influence of R. D. Laing, and he presents an illustration of Laing's scapegoat theory of schizophrenia with Gena Rowlands as the helpless victim of a bullying husband (Peter Falk) and a repressive society. Cassavetes swathes the Laingian romanticism in wet blankets; the scenes are often unshaped, and so rudderless that the meanings don't emerge. Rowlands externalizes schizophrenic dissolution: she fragments before our eyes. But her prodigious performance is enough for half a dozen tours de force—it's exhausting. Nothing she does is memorable, because she does so much. (12/9/74) (Columbia I. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; through April 29.)

The Yakuza—An attempt to sell a romantic view of gangsterism in an exotic setting. The yakuza are Japanese mobsters, and one of the items in their "code" is that you can show penitence for an offense against the mob chieftain by slicing off your little finger and presenting it to him. Robert Mitchum plays an American private eye who goes to Japan to rescue an American girl kidnapped by yakuza; he enlists the aid of a "retired" yakuza, a master-teacher of swordsmanship (Takakura Ken), and they fight side by side, the gun and the sword. At the end, Mitchum realizes that he has offended the swordsman and commits his act of penance. A swaggeringly meretricious fairytale, overloaded with exposition, and solemn when it means to be Orientally inscrutable. Richard Jordan, as Mitchum's bodyguard, gives the film its only fresh, unexpected moments; the director, Sydney Pollack, doesn't seem to understand how action-film mechanisms operate. (3/24/75) (Symphony; starting April 30.)

Young Frankenstein—A farce-parody of Hollywood's mad-scientist movies. To go to when your rhythm is slowed down and you're too tired to think; you have to let this Mel Brooks comedy do everything for you, because that's the only way it works. If you accept the silly, zizzy obviousness, it can make you laugh helplessly. Gene Wilder is the old Baron's scientist-grandson, Peter Boyle is the new Monster, and Madeline Kahn is the scientist's fiancée, who becomes the Monster's bride. The picture is in black-and-white, which holds it visually close to the films it takes off from. It's Brooks's most sustained piece of moviemaking—the laughs never let up. (12/30/74) (Festival; through April 24.)

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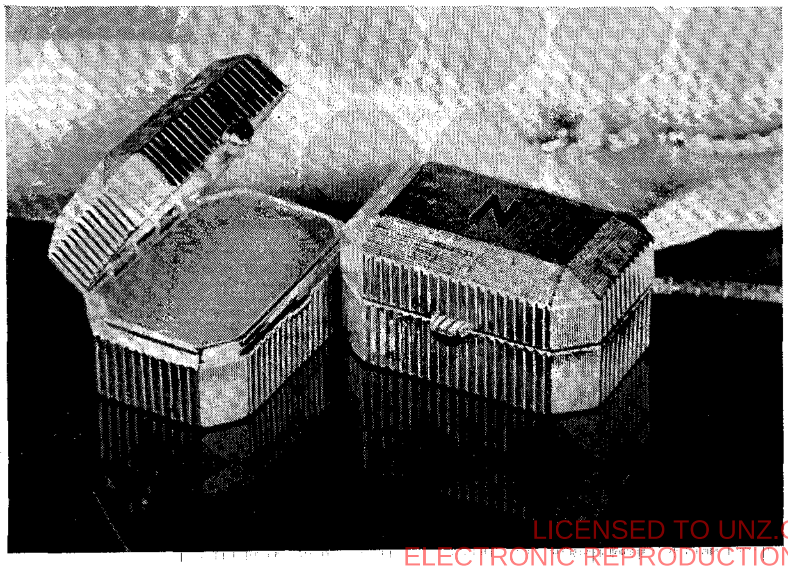

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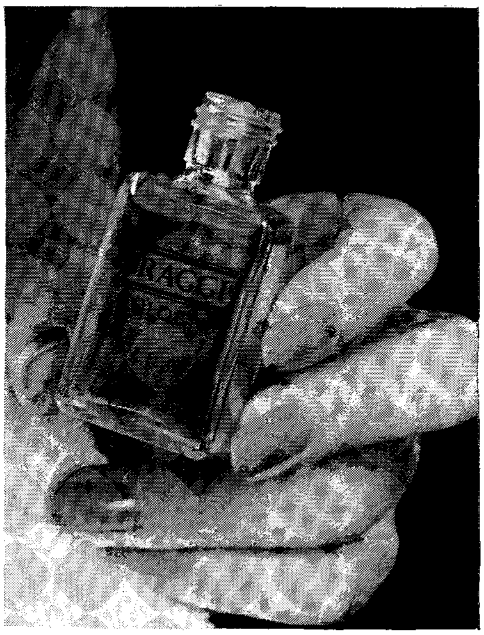

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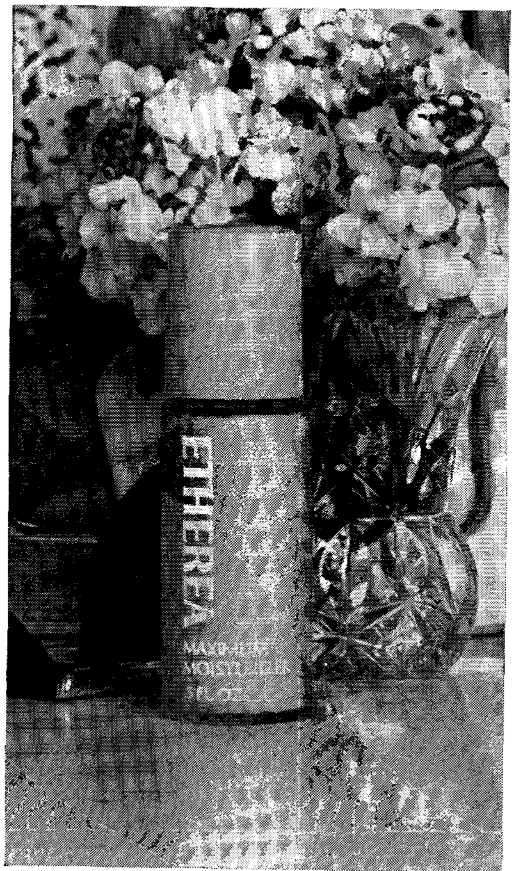

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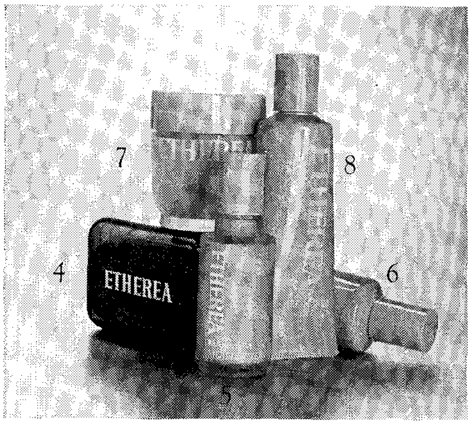
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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

MOST people don't much like garbage; they want it taken away—far away—preferably by somebody else and as quickly as possible. After that, they'd just as soon not think about it. At one time, the obvious thing to do with garbage was to hurl it into what has recently become known as the "environment"—mostly marshes in these parts. This method made Manhattan what it is today, but nobody likes this solution anymore. For many years Eastchester Bay, in the East Bronx, seemed to be a convenient place to put Bronx garbage—acres of wetlands became solid real estate—but that era is now over. The huge dump there, just east of the intersection of the Hutchinson River Parkway and the Bruckner Expressway, on the edge of Pelham Bay Park, has stopped growing laterally and has become, instead, a high rise. It was about the height of a ten-story building the other day, when we stopped by to take a look.

Overhead, at the top of the mountain, trucks and bulldozers were working the summit; they looked like toys, under a moving white cloud of seagulls. We strolled around the base camp—a collection of small buildings; piles of sand, gravel, and salt; construction vehicles of many sizes—as white Sanitation Department trucks streamed in, went up the mountain, and came down. Presently, Edward Sanda, a tough-looking man with blue eyes and graying hair, wearing a gleaming blue-and-gold badge and the green Sanitation cap and uniform, plus rubber boots and a buff-colored windbreaker, came by, introduced himself as foreman of the dump, and shook hands. He turned out to be a pleasant man and good company. "This is not the largest dump in the city," he said, somewhat apologetically. "That's over in Staten Island. But it's probably the highest."

"You call it a dump?" we inquired.

"Everybody calls it a dump," replied Mr. Sanda. "But the city prefers to call it 'sanitary landfill.' The reason it's so high—it's about ninety-eight feet above sea level at the top right now—is there's only eighty acres here, of which we use about seventy. It's too small, so we have to go up. There's something like five million tons of garbage here now. We work under the direction of engineers; they pick the locations and set the grade stakes." He pointed toward the top, where a huge bulldozer was pushing garbage over a precipice of other garbage, then backing up, and pushing more. "That's an active garbage bank," he said. "That's a sixty-ton bulldozer, cutting and rolling. 'Cutting' is pushing the garbage forward and down; then he rolls back, packing it. Then we spray it with either pine oil or what we call 'bubble gum'—a sweet-smelling disinfectant—and then cover it all with sand."

Sanda invited us to go to the summit, and we climbed into a white pickup truck ("This has got four-wheel drive," said Sanda) and slammed the door, on which was printed:

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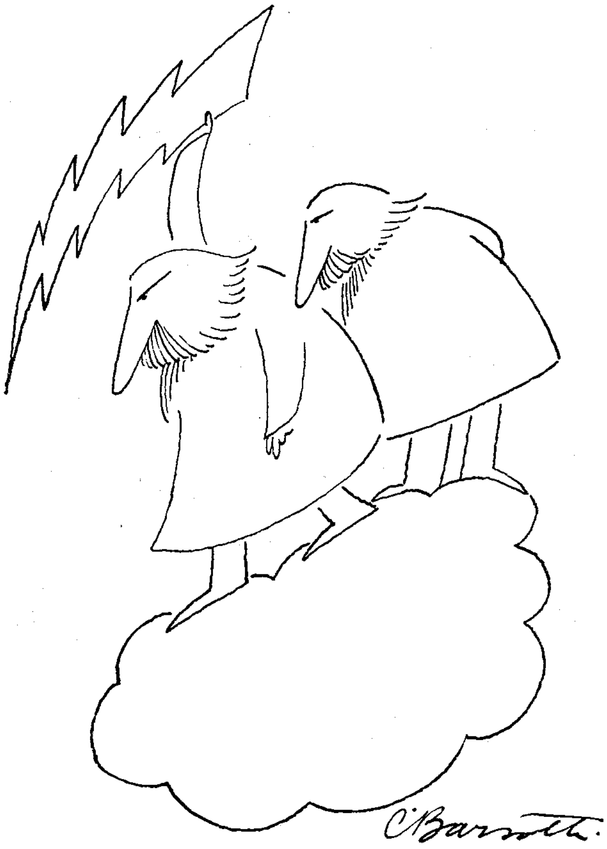
City of New York
Department of Sanitation
Bureau of Waste Disposal

Sanda gunned it, and we headed for the foothills. "That's the maintenance shanty over there," he said, pointing out the sights. "This building is where the men can take a shower and change clothes. We've got forty or fifty men working here; it varies. We've got Sanitation men, oilers, mechanics, crane operators. The equipment ranges from earthmovers, dumpers, bulldozers, tractors to a fire engine and a street flusher, which is for fire fighting or spraying disinfectant. Actually, the only way you put out a garbage fire is to bury it with a bulldozer. Over there is the electronic scale where we weigh the incoming loads. We run maybe three hundred loads a day. We accept only city garbage and private—no commercial, except by special permit."

The truck started to climb, ascending a road that went up the north face. To our left were the towers of the southern section of Co-op City. The dump appeared to block any view the occupants might have had of Long Island Sound. "They don't like us," said Sanda, "but they don't realize they're on a dump themselves. If somebody hadn't dumped there, they wouldn't be there. Anyway, when this is finished, the city is supposed to beautify it all, and get together with the local people to make it into something they can use—whatever they want."

The road turned right, and suddenly we were on top. Sanda stopped the truck, and we jumped out. It was an astonishing sight: we were on a vast, rather flat mesa of packed sand and garbage. Hundreds of yards off, the trucks and bulldozers were grinding away on the active bank, and gulls were screaming, but everywhere else it was quiet and empty and strange. Overhead, the sky was totally uninterrupted. The view, in every direction, was amazing. To the southwest, across the plateau, the packed garbage was almost level with the top of the gray-blue skyscrapers of Manhattan. Sanda pointed out the towers of the George Washington Bridge to the west, and the Throgs Neck and Whitestone Bridges to the south. "If we go much higher," he said, "we'll be able to see the Verrazano."

We walked over to the eastern edge; a grassy slope led down to the bay, far below. "This has become a nice spot now," Sanda said. "It's an older bank. We planted some seeds, and the grass started to grow." He



“Pretty good, but I’ll bet you can’t hit him again.”

pointed to a low retaining wall, perhaps five feet high, at the very bottom of the slope. “I think the fill was only supposed to go as high as that wall,” he said. There was a pleasant, soft breeze. “Feel that south wind?” Sanda asked. “You happened to catch a pretty nice day. We’ve had bad wind conditions, and trucks getting stuck in the mud. Look at the ducks swimming down there!”

We climbed back into the truck. “I was working in Rockaway before,” said Sanda as we drove ahead. “They’ve got a dump called Edgemere. There were geese, hawks, owls, pheasants; nobody bothers them. There were wild dogs out there, too. Packs of them. They used to burrow in holes in the dump. I remember one time we found a duck’s nest out there with an egg in it, right in front of where we were filling, so we postponed that area and went in a little different direction. It never did hatch. Maybe the duck sensed something. There’s not much wildlife around here. Not even rats. You could look all day and never see a rat. And very seldom at night, either. There was a strange thing at Edgemere. These old tires kept showing up. We’d cover an area with dirt, and pretty soon there’d be a bunch of tires lying on the top. I thought somebody was coming in and dumping them, but I gradually found out that that was what tires do—they sort of snake their way up through the sand, and worm their way out. They just won’t stay buried.”

The truck bounced and lurched over deep ruts to the southern edge, where we stopped and got out again. We noted many fragments of brick underfoot. “This was a road here,” said Sanda. “I salvage stone and bricks when they come in, and use them to make a road. Then, when we get the area cut, rolled, and covered, we scrape up the road and use it someplace else. We also use crushed cans; they’re very good for roads—give you traction.” Sanda pointed to a couple of human figures many yards away. “See those people? We call them ‘pickers.’ People sneak in here and sort the material. If they find a piece of brass or anything, they take it away. We make sure they don’t go where we’re working, and get hurt, but otherwise it’s not worth chasing them. They’ll claim they’re householders dumping garbage, and what can you say?” We saw at our feet, within a small space, a sweater, a plastic spoon, a shoe heel, a pink balloon saying “Happy Birthday,” a rug, a milk container, lots of glass, a blue ball, a chicken leg. It was eerie to think that this was merely the most recent Cenozoic layer of garbage, and that directly below were nearly a hundred feet and five million tons of other discarded objects, mixed with sand, going down to early-nineteen-sixties Precambrian. “You find money from time to time,” Sanda was saying, “and several years ago somebody found parts of bodies, probably from a hospital, and I’ve seen many a TV set you could plug in and it would work. Nails and hypodermic needles are a hazard.”

Looking over the south rim, we observed a minuscule figure in a red suit doing what appeared to be karate exercises; several people on horses moved through the park. “The mounted police have a stable in there,” said Sanda, “and there’s stables for the public, too. People fish over there. You see strange things from up here. One January day, it was ten degrees, and there’s this woman getting baptized in the water. They didn’t even have a car nearby. Just walked in—walked into the bay—baptized her, and walked away again.”

We drove over to where the machines were working. The gulls circled like a slow, screaming tornado over the fresh garbage, whirling at all altitudes; the highest ones were as small as motes of dust. “These gulls will take objects and drop them on your truck,” said Sanda. “I’ve had many a dent in the roof.”

We got out.

“Watch your head,” Sanda said.

He seemed to be on good terms with the seagulls, the garbage, his job—and we said so.

Sanda agreed. “Up here, it’s something different every day,” he said. “I took an interest. You’re watching something being built.” He thought for a moment, then laughed. “It’s like that bridge on the River Kwai.”

We walked toward the active bank.

“Every day is building here,” he said. “A lot of people hate their job. You wouldn’t be here if you didn’t like it.” He shrugged. “I’ve taken an interest.”

Huge bulldozers were pushing garbage outward into space, where it tumbled down brightly colored twenty-foot cliffs of earlier garbage. Beyond the cliffs we could see the Palisades, across the Hudson, and, to the north, what might have been the hills of Tarrytown, miles and miles away. The nearest bulldozer shoved a mattress over the precipice, along with a tire, plastic bags, a piece of a sink, and God knows what else. “It never stops!” said Sanda, shouting over the noise. “It’ll slow down, but it never stops!”

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Match

THE Maywood Tennis Club, on West Passaic Street, in Maywood, New Jersey, was the scene last week of the first tournament-finals match in Jill Fenton’s life, which has spanned eleven years so far. Jill’s parents, Pat and Hank Fenton, teach tennis and run the pro shop at the Central Park Tennis Courts. Jill was two weeks old the first time she came to the shop (in a little baby carriage), and since then she has spent a lot of time in and around there, first having bottles and naps, and later on having lunches and dinners, doing school homework, reading, and helping out with selling tennis balls, stringing racquets, and making appointments for lessons—and, together with her brother Bobby, who is nine, learning how to play tennis, with her father and mother as teachers. Jill has also been playing tennis with a number of the Central Park tennis-playing regulars (adults) and, recently, beating all of them (including us). Naturally, when we heard that Jill had made it to the finals of the latest Slazenger Junior Indoor Circuit Tournament for Girls of Twelve and Under in the Northeast (auspices of the Eastern Lawn Tennis Association), we set out for Maywood, in the Fentons' red Volkswagen, with the Fentons—Pat, Hank, Jill, and Bobby—and a friend of Bobby's, a nine-year-old named Erik. En route, Jill said she was very nervous and very hungry. She ate a roast-beef sandwich and some Corn Doodles in the Volkswagen, and then Erik urged her to eat some raisins, for iron, to make her strong for the match. Jill ate the raisins. We learned, somewhat to our surprise, that Jill weighs only eighty-four pounds. She is four feet ten inches tall. She was wearing a pastel-blue warmup suit over her tennis dress, which was white trimmed with red. She was also wearing white Tretorn shoes and white socks trimmed with red pom-poms, and she had a red-and-white terry-cloth sweatband on her left wrist and a red rubber band holding her hair (long and blond) in a ponytail.

The Maywood Tennis Club is beautiful: seven air-conditioned courts with good lighting; a lounge with soft chairs and sofas near low, little tables, and floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the courts; and a well-stocked tennis shop. A table held two golden trophies—each a figure of a girl, tennis racquet held aloft (sort of ready to serve), on a wooden base. One of the trophies was twelve inches high, and the other was a little smaller. On the base of the bigger one was engraved, on a gold-metal tab, "GRAND PRIX GIRLS 12 WINNER 1975." The other one had a tab engraved with "GRAND PRIX GIRLS 12 FINALIST 1975." Everybody with an interest in the tournament stood around by the trophies and looked at them. Among those looking was Lynne Malkovsky, a friendly, cheerful woman wearing a red tweed suit, who was chairman of the tournament. "This is the second time I've done Twelve and Under," she said to the others. "At this age, the girls represent the best in tennis. They have good manners."

Mrs. Malkovsky held a large chart showing that Jill Fenton had played Andrea Goldfarb and had won, 6–0, 6–1. Then Jill Fenton had played Jill Bessen and had won, 6–3, 6–1. She had played Susan Golden and had won, 6–3, 6–1. In the semifinals, Jill had beaten Ellen Fusco, 6–3, 6–0. Also in the semifinals, Sylvia Kodsi had beaten Nancy Schachnow, 6–1, 6–0, so Sylvia Kodsi was Jill's opponent. Sylvia is about three inches taller than Jill and about eighteen pounds heavier. She is a serious-looking, dark-haired girl who wears metal-rimmed eyeglasses. She is twelve and is in the eighth grade at Junior High School 43, in Brooklyn. (Jill is in the sixth grade at the Alexander Robertson School, in Manhattan.) Like Jill, Sylvia had on a warmup suit (hers was navy blue with white polka dots) over her tennis dress, and she was also wearing white Tretorn shoes and white socks (hers trimmed with pink). Her tennis dress was trimmed with pink, and had a pink belt with a metal rack in the back to hold a tennis ball. She, too, had her hair in a ponytail, held by a rubber band.

"All right, girls," said Mrs. Malkovsky. "The match will start now."

Jill and Sylvia went downstairs to the courts, where they took off their warmup suits and started warming up. Both girls hefted the ball with their feet. Professionally. The umpire was Bill Fanning, a youngish man wearing a blue blazer and gray slacks, and he stood on a bench at one end of the net to do his umpiring. He didn't smile as he watched Jill and Sylvia hit the ball to each other in practice rallies. Sylvia hit the ball with impressive force, placing her shots first in one far corner of the court and then in the other. Jill ran for the balls but missed quite a few of them. The girls were smiling at each other nicely.

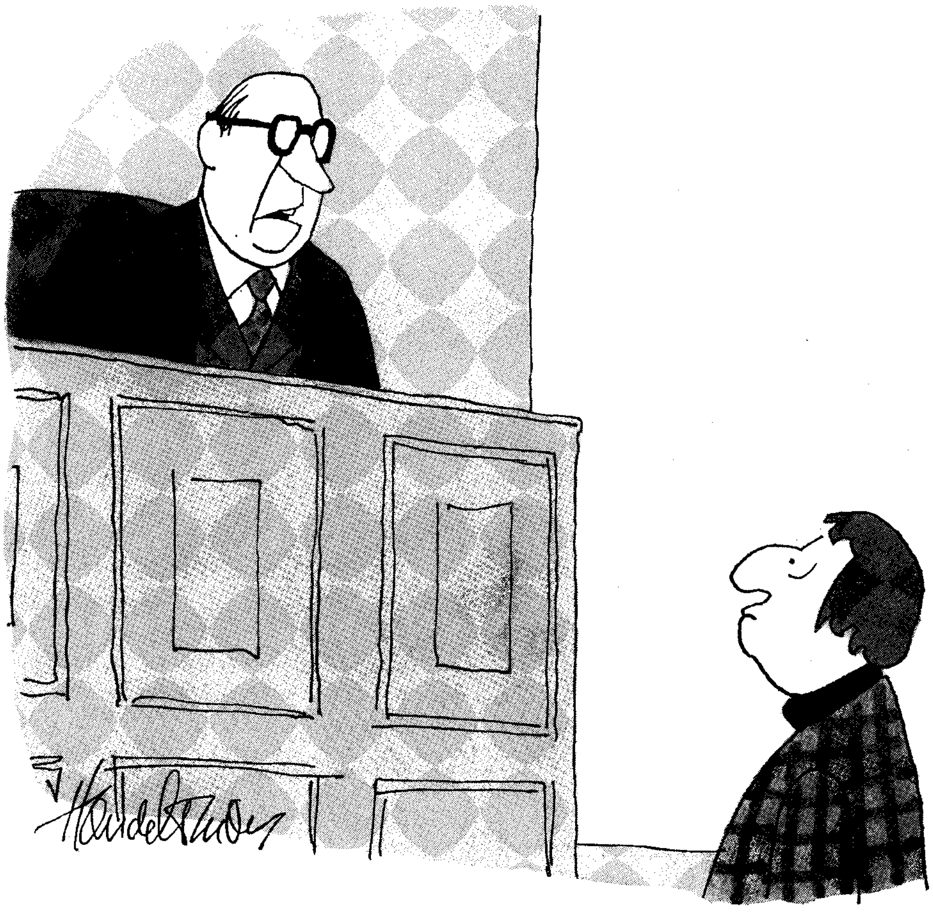
Upstairs in the lounge, Mr. and Mrs. Fenton, both of whom were wearing warmup suits (his navy, hers yellow), pressed against the glass window and stared bleakly at the players. All sound from the courts was shut out. Sylvia's parents, Dr. and Mrs. Baroukh E. Kodsi, both wearing glasses and conservative street clothes, sat in soft armchairs pulled up to the window. The two sets of parents exchanged sympathetic looks.

On the court below, Sylvia sent a backhand drive to Jill that left Jill frozen at the baseline. The girls smiled at each other.

"Oh, oh. This is going to be rough," Mr. Fenton said.

Mrs. Malkovsky said to the parents, "For the first time, there's not a thing you can do to help."

Bobby and Erik took a quick look at



"Crime does not pay at your level."

the players below and then retired to an adjoining playroom to watch "The Blue Dahlia," with Alan Ladd, on television. We watched the match alternately from one side of the court and from the lounge.

"All right, girls, let's go," the umpire said. "On my left, Miss Fenton. On my right, Miss Kodsi. Players ready. Miss Fenton will serve first."

Jill's first serve was good, and was returned by Sylvia deep into the far corner. Jill got to the ball and hit it into the net.

"Love–fifteen," said the umpire.

Jill's next serve was good and was returned by Sylvia in a backhand drive. Jill returned the ball in a kind of soft lob, and Sylvia hit it to the opposite corner, where Jill got to it in time to hit it into the net.

"Love–thirty," said the umpire.

Upstairs, Mrs. Fenton, intent, kept a poker face. Dr. and Mrs. Kodsi sat back, relaxed, in their chairs.

Jill served. Good. Sylvia returned it with a smashing forehand, Jill hit a backhand to her, and Sylvia hit the ball into the net.

"Fifteen–thirty," said the umpire.

Jill's next serve was a fault. The second serve was good, and Sylvia's return went into the net.

"Thirty all," said the umpire.

Jill's next serve was returned by Sylvia, and after a couple of rallies Sylvia hit into the net.

"Forty–thirty."

Jill then double-faulted in her serve.

"Deuce."

For the next point, Sylvia, making a strong backhand return, hit the ball out of the court.

"Advantage Miss Fenton."

After the next serve, well returned by Sylvia, Jill hit the ball to Sylvia's backhand, and Sylvia lobbed. Jill hit an overhead smash, and Sylvia hit into the net.

"Game Miss Fenton. She wins the first game."

As the girls changed ends of the court, they looked at each other, smiling, but only faintly.

Sylvia bounced the ball a lot before she tossed. Bounce. Bounce. Bounce. Then she served. Fault. Into the net. Bounce. Bounce. Bounce. Her second serve was good, was well returned by Jill, and then was driven by Sylvia to Jill's backhand in a way that left her frozen, as it had in the warmup.

"Good *shot!*" Jill called out, but she was not smiling.

Sylvia looked as though she were just getting up steam. She had Jill at 40–love. Jill lobbed the ball in a return. Sylvia backed up, reached for the ball with her racquet for an overhead smash, and missed it. The ball did a slow bounce behind her and out of reach. Before serving again, Sylvia took a ball out of the metal rack behind her and bounced it half a dozen times. Her serve, though it was very strong, was returned by Jill, but the return was out.

"Game Miss Kodsi. The games are one all."

On Jill's first serve in the third game, the serve was not returned.

"Fifteen–love."

The second serve was returned out.

"Thirty–love."

The third serve was rallied and then hit out by Sylvia.

"Forty–love."

We went back upstairs, and by the time we got there, Jill was leading by four games to one. We joined Mrs. Fenton just as Sylvia hit one of her driving backhands to Jill's backhand at the baseline, and Jill just managed to catch the ball with the wood of her racquet.

"Turn *side*ways!" Mrs. Fenton muttered to herself.

Bobby and Erik came out of the television room during a commercial break in the showing of "The Blue Dahlia," and asked how things were going. Mr. Fenton said he didn't know. He looked a bit dazed.

"She's ahead, I think," Mrs. Fenton said.

"Five to one," said Mrs. Kodsi, graciously.

"It can't be," Mr. Fenton said.

Bobby and Erik ran back to the television room.

"It's tough to be ahead five to one," Mrs. Fenton said.

Jill was in the middle of a long rally, which wound up with Sylvia hitting into the net.

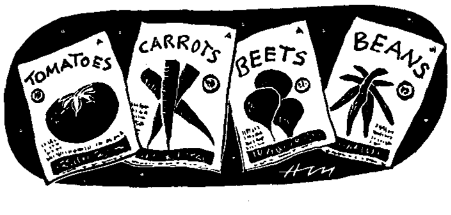
"First set Miss Fenton," said the umpire.

The second set was close to a repeat of the first, with Sylvia playing very strongly, but with Jill moving in and winning points on her opponent's errors.

"This is more important to them than center court at Forest Hills," Mr. Fenton said. "What's the score?"

"I think Jill is leading," Mrs. Fenton said.

On the court below, things looked very serious. Nobody was smiling now.



Jill made several strong put-away shots, hitting the ball to one sideline and then smashing it to the other side. With the games at 4–1, Jill leading, the girls stopped playing and took sips from cans of soft drinks. Jill looked up at the window, but Sylvia kept her gaze down, on the court. At match point, with Jill serving, Sylvia returned a hard serve by smashing it to Jill's backhand, but Jill smashed a return grimly, and finally Sylvia hit a wild return. Out. The game and the match were over. Both Jill and Sylvia looked surprised. They shook hands and put their warmup suits back on. Upstairs, Mrs. Fenton was crying. Bobby and Erik, who had come out of the television room in time to see the last game, were jumping up and down with unconcealed happiness. Dr. and Mrs. Kodsi looked a bit sad but reconciled.

"Miss Fenton, may I have the scores?" Mrs. Malkovsky asked when the players came upstairs.

"Six–one, six–one," Jill said breathlessly, looking amazed.

"What happened?" Mr. Fenton asked his wife.

"She *won*," Mrs. Fenton replied.

"Miss Fenton, may I congratulate you?" Mrs. Malkovsky said, shaking Jill's hand and giving her the twelve-inch trophy.

The match had taken an hour and ten minutes.

Going back to Manhattan in the red Volkswagen, Mr. Fenton kept saying he had thought that Jill was going to lose.

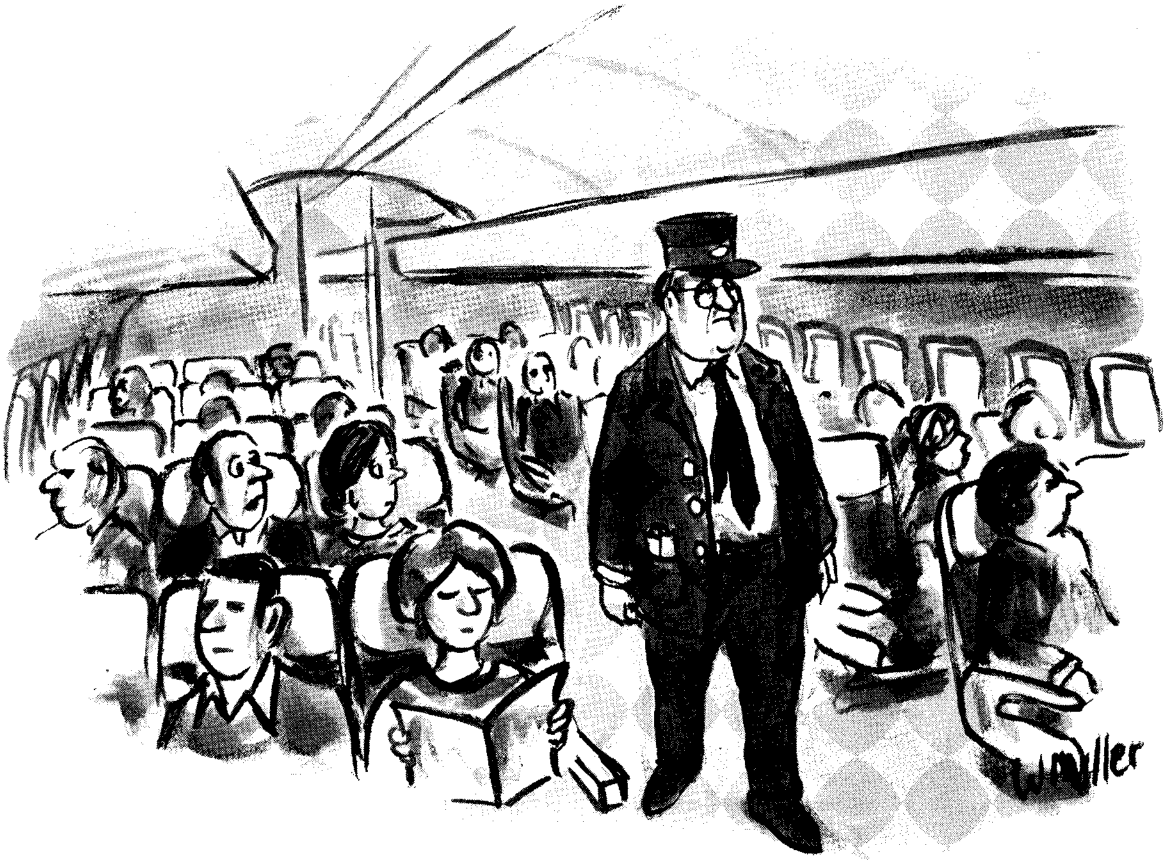
Medium Well

Celebrities thronged the Versailles Room of the Americana and a free bar there before the April 10th Friars Club testimonial dinner for The Sunshine Boys—George Burns and Walter Matthau, the two fellows who play the title roles in the about-to-be-released movie of the same title. At Friars Club affairs, comedians put on tuxedos and insult each other in public in order to raise money for charity. Friar Henny Youngman greeted Mayor and Mrs. Beame. "Good evening, Mayor. Your daughter?"

"Very funny, Henny," said the Mayor, patting him lightly on the sleeve. Twice.

"The Mayor looks great," Henny said as the Beames made the rounds. "He's taken off height. They're using all the old Mickey Rooney jokes on him now."

Sam Rudin, the builder, told the only wing collar in the room his version of his famous fight with Greenwich Village to erect 2 Fifth Avenue,



"Boy, they really meant it when they said 'No frills.'"

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one of the first white-brick high rises, on the site of the Rhinelander mansion. "The Village people yelled, 'This historic landmark! This famous family!' I said, 'What did the Rhinelanders ever do?' I said, 'If you can show me one statesman, one governor, one signer of the Declaration of Independence who lived there, I'll give you the deed on a gold plate.' No one claimed the property."

In the Imperial Ballroom Suite, every woman was presented with a little bottle of Fabergé perfume and every man got a Vapor Valet from the folks at Brother; it steams out wrinkles and harvests cat hairs from your garments. The dais ran the length of the room, and against a short wall Ray Bloch's band played walking-in music while men in friars' robes sang "Here's to the Friars" and the comedians walked in, with their clip-on black velvet bow ties. The best dishes on the menu were Columbia River Salmon, Sauce Chambord, and the kind of Mayor Beame-sized cakes formerly known as petits fours.

His Honor, by the way, was the first dinner speaker. He said, "Take my city—please. I bought that line at a discount from another show-business great, John Lindsay. But, seriously, it's great to have Walter Ma-thoo and George Burns back home. Walter was the handball champion of Rivington Street in high school, and George and I grew up on the same block on Pitt Street."

It was a long evening. With some laughs. It was like one of those movies with a lot of cameo roles, which never quite make back their investment. The toastmaster, Alan King, who made considerable comic use of the fact that he was working for free, said, "In a world where mediocrity is rampant, it's comforting to know that there are men like Walter Ma-thoo and George Burns."

Joe Smith, ninety-one years old, of Smith & Dale, the comedy duo who started in 1898 and were the original Sunshine Boys, came on at 11:30 P.M. and did both ends of an old Smith & Dale routine. Most of the bits were along these lines:

"I live by my wits."

"You live by your wits?"

"Yeah, my Uncle Markowitz and my Aunt Berkowitz."

"How's business?"

"How should it be?"

"I'm glad to hear it."

"If you ever get to Florida, look me up."

"Where will you be?"

"In California."

After Joe Smith sat down, a few tears could be seen.

Henny Youngman, when he was on, said, "I see Earl Wilson is here tonight. Earl, Jack O'Brian just called. Your column is ready."

Milton Berle, who insulted Youngman, who had insulted Berle, insulted Burns as an afterthought. He said, "We don't have exciting nights in Beverly Hills like you do here. Our idea of a big evening is to go over to George's and watch him wake up his leg."

And Jimmy Joyce, a friendly Boston comedian who tells Irish stories, came up with the one about his Aunt Nora's parrot, who used to say, "Hello, I'm Suzy, and I'm a swinger." The local pastor, Father Sweeney, told her he had two parrots, who said the rosary all the time. He told her to bring her parrot over and his parrots would teach it to her. Aunt Nora's parrot said, "Hello, I'm Suzy, and I'm a swinger," and one of the pastor's parrots said, "Throw away the beads, Charlie. Our prayers have been answered."

Walter Matthau said he admired George Burns. He went on to say that vaudevillians, not Shakespeareans, were the greatest actors in the world. They had to do their own material, before all kinds of audiences, under all conditions.

George Burns, who is seventy-nine, stole the show. He had to wait until midnight to do it, but he did it. Part of Burns' comic technique is to insult himself. His timing is still the greatest. He uses a stammer, a cigar in a holder, and a habit of licking his lips quickly to great advantage. The lip-licking is probably left over from the pre-holder days, when he chewed his stogies. He took a puff on his cigar, and through clouds of smoke he said, as his face reemerged, "I'll, I'll, I'll, I'll tell you something about George M. Cohan. He'd only pal around with actors that had no talent." He licked his lips several times. "I was one of his closest friends."

FOR SPEEDY DELIVERY, INCLUDE ZIP CODE AND WRITE FAST

Americans who have shared the discouraging conviction that only the British know how to carry on a high-class intimate correspondence (as between Harold Nicolson and Vita Sackville-West, the Brownings, and Bernard Shaw and anybody) were given a measure of hope last month by some otherwise tragic news out of Englewood, New Jersey. When the sheer weight of sixteen years of billets-doux to each other collapsed the attic floor of their neo-Colonial high ranch at 16 Maple Lane, burying Olga and Fred Mindig under eight tons of high-rag-content paper, the world became privy to a remarkable correspondence. The Mindigs' literary executor, their twelve-year-old son, Jay, made a valiant attempt to shield the work from curious eyes, but one clump of letters—they were from late March of 1962—spilled from the window of the guest bathroom and scattered across Maple Lane, drifting in such depth against the front door of No. 17 as to deny access to that residence. This fortuitous occurrence made public the awesome dimensions of the correspondence, and last week young Jay yielded to the pressure of scholars and publishers and signed a six-figure contract with Caconym Press for publication of selections from his parents' letters, to appear in bimonthly volumes over the next nine years.

What first distinguishes the Mindig correspondence is the pair's epistolary fecundity with each other in the face of other heavy calls on their writing energies. Fred was the editor and writer of *Water Cooler*, the biweekly house organ of International Products Corporation. Olga wrote a daily letter of at least ten pages to her mother in Moline, Illinois. Each also kept a personal diary, a voluminous garden book, and a will that underwent constant revision. Both submitted from six to twelve entries weekly, under pseudonyms, to the contest in *New York* magazine. Once a week, Fred wrote a thoughtful missive to each of the three news magazines, and every other week an angry one to *The New York Review of Books*. He was a frequent contributor as well to trade publications in the fields of work shoes, home swimming pools, industrial ovens, and preventive forestry. Olga always had a novel going, although she apparently never submitted any of her twenty-two finished works for publication. Finally, each wrote a daily hortatory letter of considerable length to their son at school, which Fred would leave for him at the principal's office during the lunch hour.

What is perhaps unique in this prodigious exchange of letters is that Fred and Olga Mindig were only separated *for four nights during their entire marriage*—when she was in Englewood Hospital having Jay. (It is regrettable that a careless candy-striper apparently mislaid the six letters Olga wrote during her brief labor.)

Under what circumstances, then, did the Mindigs write each other? Even a cursory examination of the letters provides vivid answers to this question. By permission of their general editor, Ella Graham Potash (Jay Mindig's social-studies teacher), the following material has been selected from a few of the missives written during a single week—that of October 11, 1970. (Copyright restrictions, it should be noted, limit the presentation of anything more than brief excerpts.) The first letter is from Olga to Fred ("Fah" is her pet name for him and will occur frequently. It is an abbreviation of Isfahan, as in "*Isfahan Mahisfahan*," or "Isfahan is half the world." He called her "Isan"—the other letters making up the name of the fabled city. As neither of these sobriquets comes easily to the tongue, in speech they tended to call each other Freddy and Olg):

> Is there a still-life less moving, more earthbound than a note from wifey beside a salami sandwich in a Glad Bag? I once promised, darling Fah, to respect your lunchbox as a temple of privacy, and yet it struck me, as my knife passed through the redolent Genoa, how quickly the days of this autumn have faded, the leaf-stripped branches exposing the crystalline windows of the adjacent Kwik-Way Laundry, just as our love shines every day more clearly in the unleafed marriages that surround us . . .

From Fred to Olga, the same day:

> . . . mimosa and snapdragon, yellow roses and African violets. Beyond, a blanket of anemones (sounding that name alone can weaken my knees). And, at the edge of my vision, spider mums, proud yet trembling. What, you may ask, brings Fah to Goodfried's Floral Shop at this hour of day? Dearest Isan, only the off chance that Bert, the delivery boy, is making a drop near Maple Lane and will slip these random thoughts under our door before the winds of forgetfulness chill them. Now then. If, as you observed over Jell-O last night, our Presidents come increasingly from wealth and wealth from energy, is it not likely soon, since our Chief Executive must be native-born (and Hawaii is further from Washington than Kuwait), that . . .

Olga to Fred ("Icky" is their private name for Jay, short for Ichabod Crane; they were almost certain he was conceived on the Croton aqueduct, south of Tarrytown, about half a mile from where Washington Irving lived some years after writing "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"):

> Why does our union endure when so many are dissolving like grease under Ajax? To paraphrase: "This union forever—hurrah, boys, hurrah!" Icky binds us, yes, but so do myriad inconsequentials—our shampoo, to pull one example from the unhealthy air, and the

disparate ways we use it. When you uncurl the bottom of our family tube tonight to administer your particular squeeze, and find therein this moody missive (wrinkled in celebration of the everyday), you should take it as awed recognition of the infinite choices open to all of us, and how Fah and Isan, in the face of them all, continue to choose each other. And even as I affirm this I wonder how . . .

Fred to Olga ("H. J." is Hilda Jonkle, a quondam mah-jongg companion of Olga's):

The words on that sealed journey from phone to ear may be my Isan's, but surely not the music. By filtering out the highs and lows, Ma Bell cheats me of you and delivers a flattened burble through the instrument handlessly locked between my shoulder and head. And now this poor surrogate for your sweet voice is rising toward a question, and my pen must idle while I give myself to its plaint.

Later:

You launch what promises to be a full history of H. J.'s neuralgia, and I am free at last to return to substance. If these lines affirm a tie between us stronger than any the N.Y. Tel. Co. might devise, I trust . . .

From the evidence of subsequent interviews with Mrs. Jonkle, it seems likely that the following, from Olga to Fred, was written during the same phone call:

Your voice, miniaturized to a precious jewel I would proudly wear at throat or navel, continues its measured appraisal of the negative income tax while the irate citizens of Englewood circle this glass booth bumping the walls and glaring—creatures out of Jacques Cousteau's nightmares. Did you hear, as you recounted your riposte to today's Op-Ed flummery, the piranha here who shouted through a crack he forced in the door, "Write your shopping list at home, lady!" Shopping list indeed! My sudden hip-thrust against the bent hinges gave eloquent response to his kneecap. But the reason for this note—for words I cannot trust to spindly wires either overhead or underfoot—is to reply with maximum reason and minimum passion to your 2 A.M. pensée folded into the leftover poundcake. If, as you say, life is not unlike a radish, how can one help but notice that its crisp resistance to the bite soon gives way to a bitter . . .

Fred to Olga (The Grossbarts were old friends, the relationships Byzantine. Myron "Sonny" Grossbart was class treasurer at De Witt Clinton High School the year Fred Mindig worked afternoons at Howard Johnson's; Olga and Janeen Grossbart [née Plange] took lessons from the same piano teacher, a Mrs. Wohl, though not during the same years; Burt Saxby, a friend of Olga's father, and Sonny's uncle, Howard Voyteck, nearly became partners in a dry-cleaning shop):

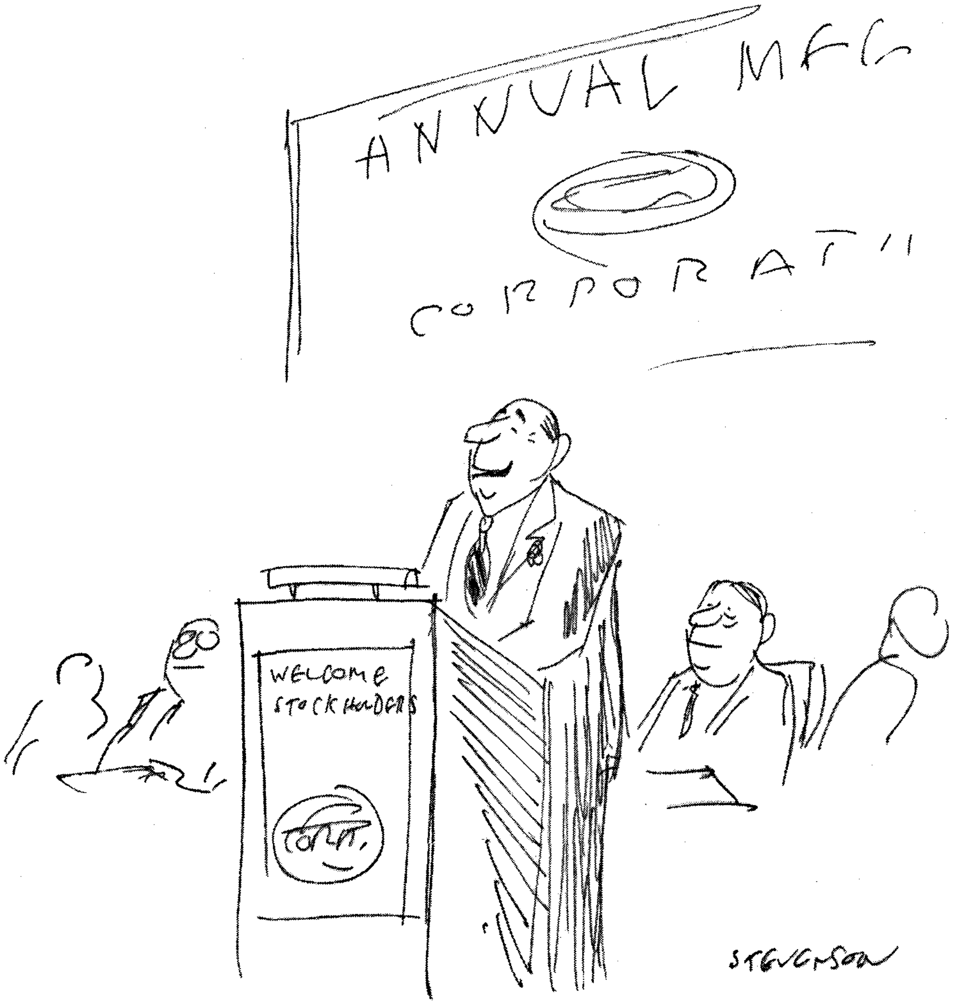
Can you stomach the sheer brass of the Grossbarts' ordering lobster and steak when you and I are on filet of sole and steamed tongue? (This note will be difficult enough to decipher, written as it is under cover of the tablecloth, without the additional handicap of a hand shaking with rage!) Yet on your face, darling Isan, I detect not a flicker of the deep resentment you have a right to share with me. I have decided that what sets you off from the Sonnys and Janeens of this tired globe is your capacity to find more pleasure in steamed tongue than they do in all their lobsters. And so when you read this, which I trust you found in your menu when it was handed you to choose a dessert, I implore you to help me keep in check my own thoroughly steamed tongue. Let your orbs pick past the "wood grain" pepper mill, plastic flowers, and velveteen menu cover until they come to rest on my own worshipful eyes. Locked in a gaze that shuts out Grossbart mastication, we will feast upon each other yet again, a pair of Brillat-Savarins nibbling our souls. For . . .

Olga to Fred (The Engle Acres is off the Palisades Parkway, less than two miles from the Mindig residence):

No instrument is more frustrating to a writer's purpose than a motel pen and, of all that have come grudgingly into my grasp, surely none limp and stumble like the perverse tools furnished by the Engle Acres. Which is why these pages have been so few. And now I hear from the bathroom the imminent end of prefatory ablutions, which means that I must soon cease these scrawls and turn to the dreary rites of adultery. Let me add in haste one thought—for you will be long asleep when I arrive home, and will not find these lines deftly posted in your left shoe until you dress in the morning before departing for the office. I have decided it was not your crooked smile—the left corner of your mouth down, in recognition of the existential condition, the right up, in tribute to your fantasy life—that first attracted me to you but rather the . . .

According to *Publishers Weekly*, Volume I of the Mindig correspondence, covering the turbulent first eight days of their honeymoon, will appear in an initial press run of forty thousand copies. It will definitely be in the bookstores in time for the Memorial Day weekend.

—GORDON COTLER



"Que será, será."

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THE LISTS OF THE PAST—V

SHUT-EYE NIGHT RIDE

FINALLY it is time to put the tools away and come out of the garden for the winter. The roses rest, pruned and dormant, programmed to develop thousands of new buds next season. Lawn won't need mowing till May. Perennial garden mulched, bulbs buried in the cutting garden, brand-new compost pile under the willows beside the fence with a couple of pickets missing that separates his house from the neighbors', worms stirring in the 130-degree-Fahrenheit alembic, changing leaves and coffee grounds to nitrogen-heavy mold. The people who moved out of the house next door bequeathed him a playgroundful of equipment—slide, swings, seesaw, jungle gym—for the grandchildren. An attractive nuisance, unstable Tivoli by the side of the house, which he's got to plant deeper, in cement. (One child's already taken a slow-motion, heart-stopping backward ride—the rocking swings pulling their legs out of the rain-soft ground like an iron insect—but suffered only minor damage.)

He and the biweekly helper, Myron, have put away the screens and installed the storm windows, drained the boiler and reset the thermostat on the furnace for cold months. Virtually nothing left to do outside, time for indoor activities, basement puttering: working on the boat fittings, if you have one, checking all doors and lintels against drafts, to keep in the furnace heat. Suburban people empty their beach-club lockers, take down the tennis nets, get anti-freeze for the car, and drive home to keep warm and play bridge.

Boats in drydock, the gates to the beaches unlocked only on weekends, when people come down to feed the geese who take shelter in the storm-frayed sandy cove. Sand littered with sweet-gum fruits like hibernating hedgehogs. The cyclists ride slower and more cautiously on sluggish wheels, play outside briefly in the pre-equinoctial light, come in, and do their homework before dinner.

Those sojourners the winter birds—chickadees, juncos, gold and purple finches, white-throated sparrow who sings "Old Sam Peabody Peabody Peabody," house sparrows, iridescent jays, and, of course, the cardinal, bright as a maple leaf even now—appear and reappear at the bird feeders the gardener has bought or made, devouring their own weight thrice a day with the appetites of birds. He watches them through the double windows of the solarium, Roger Tory Peterson on the glass-topped table where people eat in summer. New ones come periodically. Report of evening grosbeaks from the new neighbors across the lawn, who also keep a tray for the insatiables. He's never seen an evening grosbeak, and sits hopefully in wait, though he can tell of painted buntings and skies darkened with passenger pigeons, from his childhood in Iowa.

More bulbs, thirty pots full, are in different parts of the cellar: (1) Nether Darkness, beneath the wings of the slanting cellar doors, (2) Inner Sanctum, a vestibule between the inside and outside doors, and, finally, in the coolest corner of the basement itself—so that from January on there will always be one hyacinth blooming, about to bloom, or just past. He writes the color on the pot: "Delft." "Pink." When with plenty of water and judicious inattention they are ready, he'll wrap the pots in tinted foil and take them upstairs or give them to friends, and, ivory, purple, rose, their sculptured petals will release fragrance like a spilled bottle of perfume in whatever room they're in, an artificial, top-heavy five-day wonder, spring in February and then bye-bye, bulbs specifically bred to spend all their color and sweetness in a forced hothouse blooming, and to be dumped as soon as they're rancid and the tips of the spiky leaves overgrow the flower and turn yellow and the stalks lean at a forty-five-degree angle, bent down with the creamy or violet weight, encephaloids, rank—you can't replant these hyacinths, they won't divide. By February, his forced plants will be all over the village.

Extract the translucent plastic wedge of the rain gauge his wife ordered from a catalogue, one of the best presents he ever got; stow it somewhere in the garage. It can't measure snow precipitation (ten inches of snow to one of rain), and it would freeze and crack. Wash down the garden furniture and put it away under black plastic covers. D-CON for the house attic, so the black squirrels won't take up residence, and for the garage loft, where one already has. Think once more about moving to a smaller house or Florida; we're not getting any younger. All this furniture—where did it come from?—that we don't need, the youngsters could use.

Halloween, he checks the trees around the house for loose or broken branches, and in the afternoon drives uptown to collect candy for the kids who will be knocking: miniature chocolate bars, silver kisses, chewing gum, red-hots; and a twenty-pound bag of bird chow. Bowls of candy corn spread

Drinking Buddies

"As nearly as I can figure out, it's a monument to bad taste."

in the pantry for the beggars, and one of pennies, for their loot bags. By evening he has called it a day. Not too many children in costume will be coming all the way up their long drive, anyway, when there are so many houses closer to the street; they can afford to miss his treats this once. The grandchildren can use up his provender.

His wife telephones the families in the immediate vicinity. "Mrs. Noonan. Mr. H. feels a little grippy. . . . Oh no, nothing serious, but he doesn't want the children to catch anything. We're going to turn off the porch lights so they won't ring the bell. He didn't want Billy and Tommy to be disappointed. Tell them he was looking forward to guessing who they were. . . . A ghost and Spider-Man? Oh, how cute. Well, we didn't want to be spoiling their fun." Hanging up, she taps a pencil against her teeth, working the crossword puzzle. He roams around the house, setting back all the clocks to Standard Time. Then he turns off the first-floor lights and comes slowly up the stairs.

THANKSGIVING they celebrate: the customary, elaborate, ever more copious feed, under the dining-room chandelier. All the leaves in the dining table, spread with the heirloom linen cloth. The Sheffield candlesticks and the wedding silver. The grandchildren help set the table—big spoon, little spoon, knife, dinner fork, salad fork. Dessert fork, dessert spoon. Butter knife. The blue-and-white dinner plates, with the gold ring wearing thin, the Waterford wineglasses, and the crystal goblets.

A sunbeam from the solarium strikes the chandelier, knocking light several hundred ways, sprinkling the table and the food and the faces with rainbow-colored confetti. The children paddle their fingers in the light. He breaks into song: "The fairies are dancing, tra-la, la, la, la."

She looks to see that it's all on the table and steps on the buzzer, which is a cloisonné turtle.

Sue, the maid, goes back and forth from the kitchen. Bird on the Lowestoft platter, surrounded by peaches and parsley and crab apples. The red ring of rice with peas in the middle. Cloverleaf rolls, giblet gravy, extra oyster-and-chestnut stuffing in a bowl. He carves the turkey with verve. The plates pass from hand to hand while the maid circulates with the salad, creamed onions. Champagne pops.

"Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen." From the rest of the table: "May the Lord provide for the wants of others."

The room fills with the clink of tableware and the sound of speech and chewing, often simultaneous. The mother of the little boys cuts up their food, too busy to have tasted anything on her plate. The older grandchild is very good and the little one spills.

"Sit down, Kenny."

"Gobble-gobble."

"Please pass the gravy."

"Who's ready for more turkey?" He's almost too busy to eat, too, carving up the bird for the rest of them, scooping out the stuffing. Chuck chokes on an olive. Cornelia gets the giggles; everybody catches them. They remember when, and praise the grandchildren and each other. The mistress of the house gets a word in edgewise.

Chuck and his aunt wish on a wishbone. It breaks off even.

"What did you wish for?"

"I wished it was Christmas." Bzzz. Kenny's gone under the table: the voice of the turtle. Sue rushes in from the kitchen.

"Kenny, go play until it's time for the pie."

"Pumpkin, pumpkin, gobble, gobble."

White meat, dark meat, drumstick, anyone?

"Hey, how about a toast?" proposes the little boys' father.

"What do we have to be thankful for?" asks his mother-in-law.

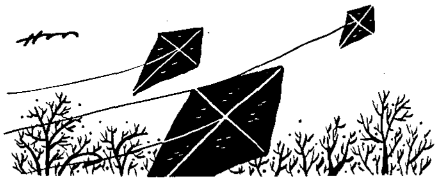
The head of the table rises: "To your new home! To all of us. To us old people for getting the young here, and to the young for forgiving us!" Sits down to a burst of applause and digs into the fodder to make up for lost time, while the youngest of all, the ciphers, play at his feet. Dishes fly back into the kitchen, tablecloth stained like a flag. Pumpkin pie, mince pie, ice cream, hard sauce, cheese. He takes only one helping of each.

"First time in my life I haven't had that overstuffed feeling." They're in the living room, the children working off their gobbler on the stairs. (No stairs in New York like these for them to scamper on.) Being understuffed endows the older man with energy; he remembers the untapped Halloween candy and the funny-face masks he bought for the boys. Sapped and heavy from the banquet, the other relations are glad to rest while he, playing the Halloween man, answers the doorbell and the children run back and forth on the porch, and he gives them candy over and over, till even the children are panting.

HIS old and best friend comes to visit one afternoon, Mort Martin, with his wife, formerly of this village, now of Florida. Thirty pounds lighter after recovering from yet another surgical procedure. The wives bring each other up to date while the men reminisce in the basement, relive old jam sessions. He locates a bunch of scratchy 78-r.p.m. records—Fats Waller, Earl (Fatha) Hines, Gene Krupa, Satchmo. Classics. And, of course, the big-band sounds—Dorsey, Goodman.

Mellowed by a bottle of Scotch he discovers in a drawer of the work desk, they compare operations and boast of their scars. Spell each other at the old Steinway he's been almost too busy to play all summer. "Liza, Liza . . ." "Tea for Two." And the wives hear music coming up from the basement, muted, like steam in the radiator. "Chinatown My Chinatown. Where the lights are low-oo—"

Then, before dark, of course they all have to see around the place, and though it's cold he marshals them outside, and points with pride. Rose garden. Vegetable garden. Cutting garden. Perennial garden. Wild garden. Old compost heap. New compost heap (next spring he'll fence it). Newly laid flagstones along the walk entirely lined with azaleas sent to him while he was in the hospital last spring. "Nearly broke my back getting them in."



Later he makes notes in a dog-eared paperback book called "Understanding Surgery." Always the possibility of *that* in a man of his age. Pooh, it's practically a minor operation. Anyhow, he's interested in finding out what happened to Mort.

His old friends are probably on their way back to Florida this minute. As soon as he's feeling tip-top, he and his wife will be heading down themselves. You can't fool yourself, you're not getting any younger, and besides, down there it's a year-round growing season (we'll miss all the children; they can visit). Florida! He'll meet up with his friends the summer birds. Ponce de León. The Fountain of Youth.

Dreaming of Florida, he falls asleep with only minor discomfort. In the

CLANCY

We bought him at auction, tranquillized to a drooping halt,
A blue-roan burro to be ridden by infants in arms, by tyros
Or the feeblest ladies, to be slapped or curried or manhandled—
A burro for time exposures, an amiable lawnmower.

But he burst out of his delivery truck like a war-horse,
Figure-eighting all night at the end of his swivel chain,
Chin high, octuple-gaited, hee-hawing through two octaves
Across our field and orchard, over the road, over the river.

While I fenced-in our farm to keep him from barnstorming
Neighbors and dignified horses, then palisaded our house
Like a beleaguered fort, my wife with sugar and rolled oats
And mysteries of her own coaxed him slowly into her favor.

He stood through the muddiest weather, spurning all shelter,
Archenemy of gates and roofs, mangler of halters,
Detector of invisible hackamores, surefooted hoofer
Against the plots of strangers or dogs or the likes of me.

But she would brush him and whisper to him out of earshot
And feed him hazel branches and handfuls of blackberries
And run and prance beside him, while he goated and buck-jumped,
Then stood by the hour with his long soft chin on her shoulder

While I was left on the far side of my own fence
Under the apple trees, playing second pitchfork
Among a scattering of straw over the dark-gold burro-apples
Too powerful for any garden, even the Hesperides.

And I still watch from exile as, night or morning, they wander
Up slope and down without me, neither leading nor following
But simply taking their time over the important pasture,
Considering dew and cobwebs and alfalfa and each other.

And all his ancestors, once booted through mountain passes
Bearing their grubstaked packtrees, or flogged up dusty arroyos
To their bitter ends without water, are grazing now in the bottom
Of her mind and his, digesting this wild good fortune.

—DAVID WAGONER

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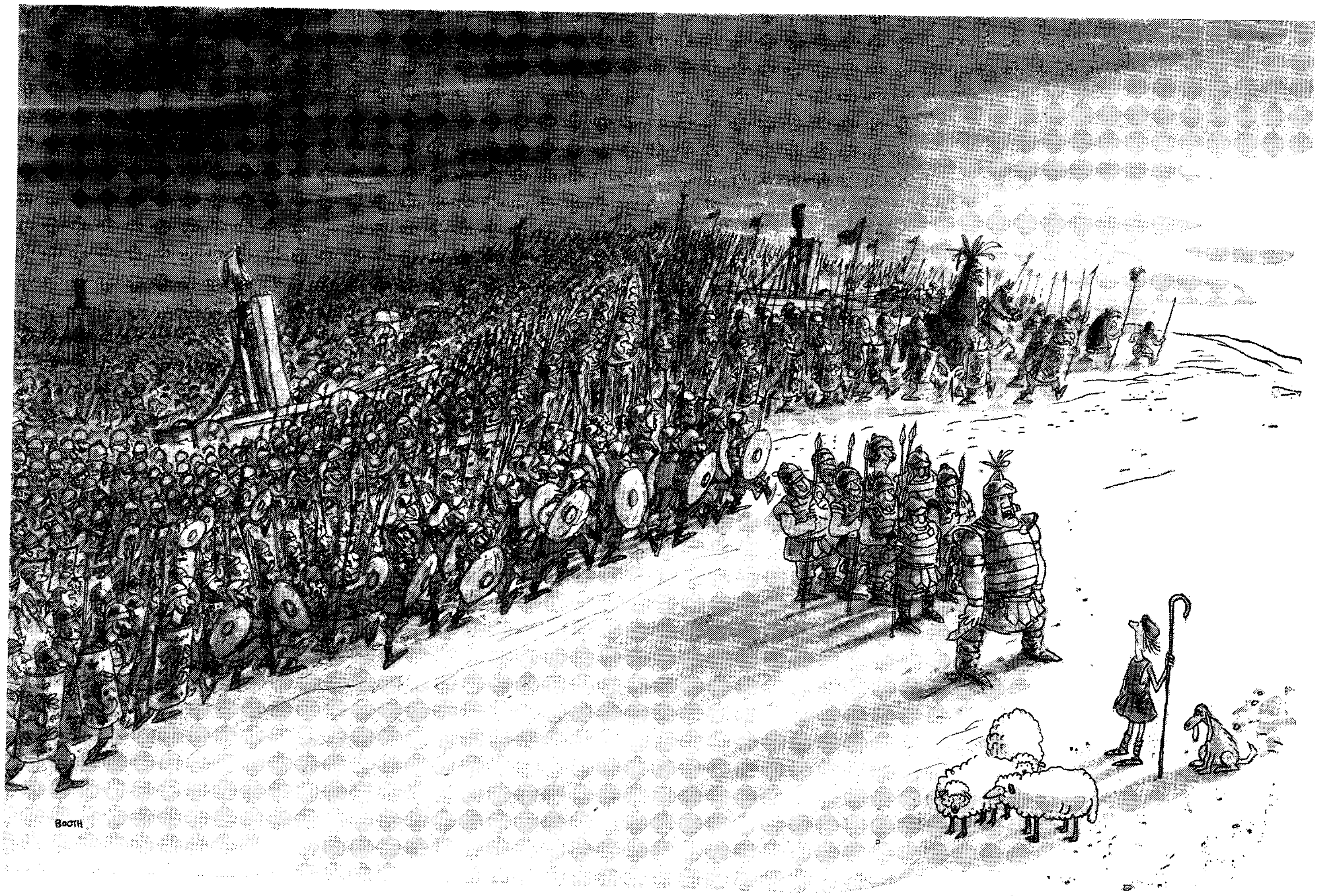


"General Varus's compliments. Which way to Teutoburger Wald?"

• •

middle of the night, his wife wakes: he's awake and prowling again.

Monday he's got a cold. "Let's have a look at you in the hospital," says his friend the doctor. Tuesday, there's a shadow of doubt about the liver scan. Wednesday: False Alarm!

His wife telephones her children. "Ben's coming home!"

Thursday he vomits a stream of black bile clear across the room, a gusher. Friday he comes upon the word "obstruction" in the surgery book. Saturday he urgently suggests a consultation with another doctor.

"I was talking to him on the phone just now," his wife tells one of her daughters a little later, still holding the quiet receiver in her right hand. "He said, 'Well, I have to hang up now, they're taking me to the operating room.' "

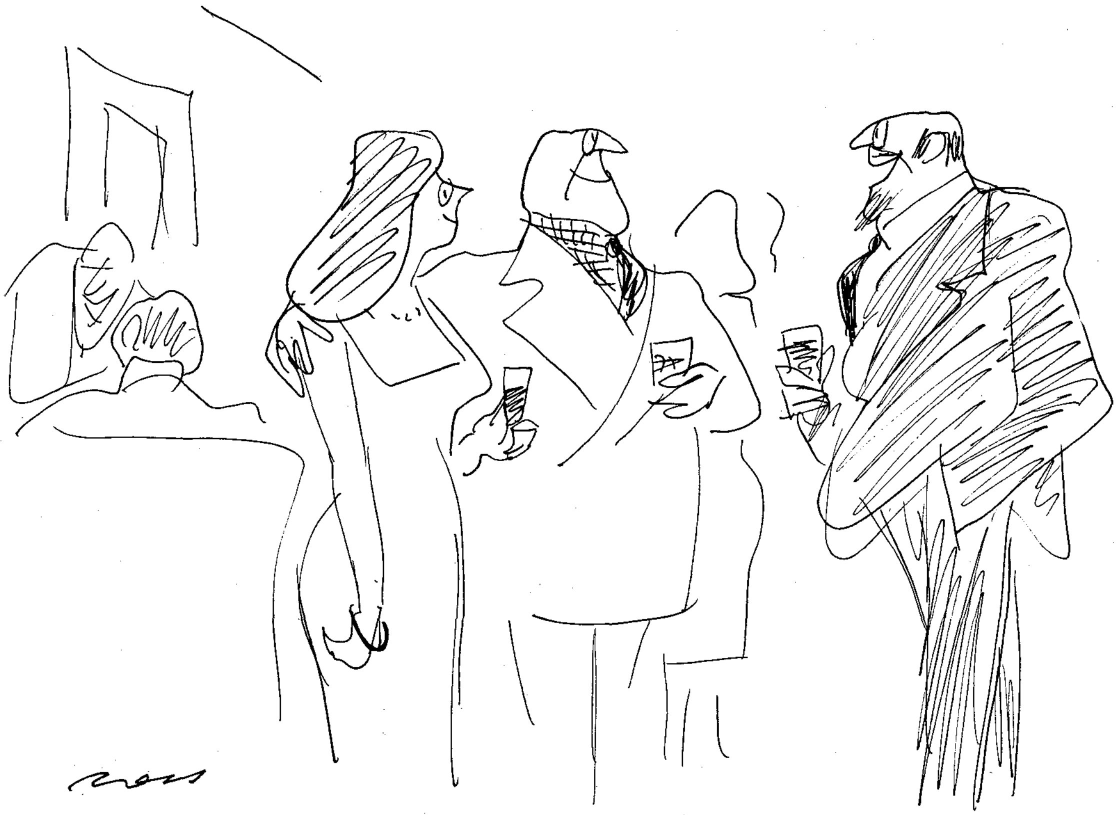
IT is the brightest day of winter, near the solstice, high noon and the sun half-mast, crystal clear through the bare trees. Geese on the beach coming to the hand, elegant as Englishmen at Ascot. Scared and hungry and angry, snatching stale bread crusts with beaks that could break a finger. A man who looks like him from the back is tossing crusts from a safe distance. Good day for experimental picture-taking, with the new Christmas camera purchased for oneself in advance. Steady the heavy telephoto lens with one hand and press it against the cheek as the book illustrates, swivel the geese into focus, get the range, click. Open the shutter wide, check the light meter, forgetting everything else, snap. Stop down, for greater depth of field, try to eliminate jiggle.

The camera can't record it all—the whisper of waves at the edge of the seaweed, footsteps crunching on the sand and the gumballs, the salt smell, the chill of the camera body and the firm tug of the iron beak, the goosey chatter. But as the eye cannot, as words cannot, it can catch and hold on to the fastest thing in the world, light, and show exactly the way a goose feeds, forever. Provided you have loaded it correctly. The third, mindless eye, recording a moment of extra time, when it was crystal clear and the old dead leaves made a gentle noise on their trees, and the birds came with shame to the hand. Before the man who looked like him turned away from the water.

"FOOLED you," said Soul. "We'll see," says Body.

He's having the time of his life: plenty of Demerol so it doesn't hurt like before, nurses at his beck and call. Adhesions, that's the word. Always known he was an adhesive type. He feels like a billion. The temp is a little over a hundred, but that's entirely normal following this kind of surgery.

There's a sign on the door requesting *Times* and Coffee. His visitors find him cranked up in bed, writing out a Christmas list. For a man who hates presents, he has a lot of requests. Last night he knocked his glasses to the floor—they have been taped at the bridge with surgical adhesive—and this ad in the newspaper shows a thing to keep glasses in, a brass caddy, which you can buy from Hammacher Schlemmer, just what he's always wanted. And some semi-stretch heavyweight socks. And he needs another carton of cigarettes. His hair ruffled against the



"And this, I assume, is Mrs. Nice Guy?"

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pillows, like a baby bird. With a tube coming out of his nose like a black worm, for the melancholy bile to flow.

"On second thought, don't bring it to me yet. Save it for when I come home."

Everyone in the room is smoking, including the nurse, and he sees them through a comfortable blue haze. Daughters perch on his bed, his wife in a chair at his side, or fussing with the flowers on the dresser.

After they've gone, he asks to be cranked down, circles the remote-control dial of the TV: nothing worth watching. Too early to ask for a shot? Vaguely worried about something, but for the life of him he can't think what.

"ALL over the abdomen," says the doctor, drunk with rage and pity. "Promise you we won't—"

"Make him suffer."

"—drag it out. Up to you, though."

"Make it as easy for him as possible."

Quickening him toward his end. Now Ben, this isn't going to hurt at all.

WHAT else can you buy for a man who's already got all the good shirts he needs? Gadgets and whatchamacallits—nothing useful, things to use. Eyeglass caddy and an indoor-outdoor thermometer. "The Last Whole Earth Catalog," a barometer, jigsaw-puzzle picture of mushrooms, Yankee bird feeder, Scott Joplin ragtime record album, and a year's subscription to *Natural History* magazine. The little boys get a cassette tape recorder, their mother a Polaroid camera. Images of their Christmas fun to bring to the hospital, a Colorpack snapshot of grandchildren and women on the living-room sofa beside the Christmas tree. (Squinting, holding it practically under his nose—the Plexiglas tube is gone, finally—"Very good shot of you all, and I see where a big piece of plaster is coming down from my ceiling.")

"The first time nobody gave me any clothes! It's the best Christmas I ever had!" Pleated plastic drapes conceal the window with a view he's lost interest in, having mastered it the first day: the top of a tree he'd like to know the name of, the Korvettes' shopping center, Long Island Sound, Long Island, and the cloudy sky. Not enough ambient light for black-and-white photography, even if the Reception Desk had permitted it—

"No picture-taking allowed in this hospital!"

"But it's a Christmas present."

"The Administration prohibits it. Leave cameras at the desk, please."

So the fast film can't catch the old man this time, and he sends no message on the tape recorder to the little boys, because they have already put the machine out of whack.

"Lovely, lovely. Now you better go. Take these things with you. I'll play with them when I come home." Hustling them out so he can have a shot and fall asleep again, killing time till he leaves the hospital.

ON New Year's Day, a shining one. He spurns the wheelchair and his wife's arm, and walks out unassisted, a little weaker than after the last time but raring to go. Free at last! Greets all hospital plants in the sunroom again: more azalea, *Schefflera*, which he is told will bloom when it is five years old, African violet, begonia, red poinsettia and white, gardenia, wandering Jew. Is somewhat embarrassed by the quantity of cards and letters in his bedroom.

Cheerful—

Don't let the doctor put one of
those sticks in your mouth...
until you know who ate the ice
cream.

Artistic—

Little pansies with eyes of blue
Seem to look direct at you

chirps a bluebird on a fountain by a flowering blue tree.

Pious—

So I spend many happy hours
In my garden of flowers

May God Bless You & Heal Your Body. Praying for you. Grace Robbins.

Folks he hasn't heard from in years, contemporaries—

You . . . are my favorite
Master of Ceremonies

("A Flat-Foot Floogey with a Floy Floy"—remember when you led us to that in the Poconos?)

or has entertained more recently—

Dear Mr. Holcomb, I remember when you played the paino. We all sat down and played and played and played. Christmas always reminds me of your

> days as Santa. Keep up those spirits of yours—
>
> We had so much fun that Fourth of July—I can still hear your music boxes.

Why are so many people writing to him now?

> I still remember

writes Ronald from the University of Toronto

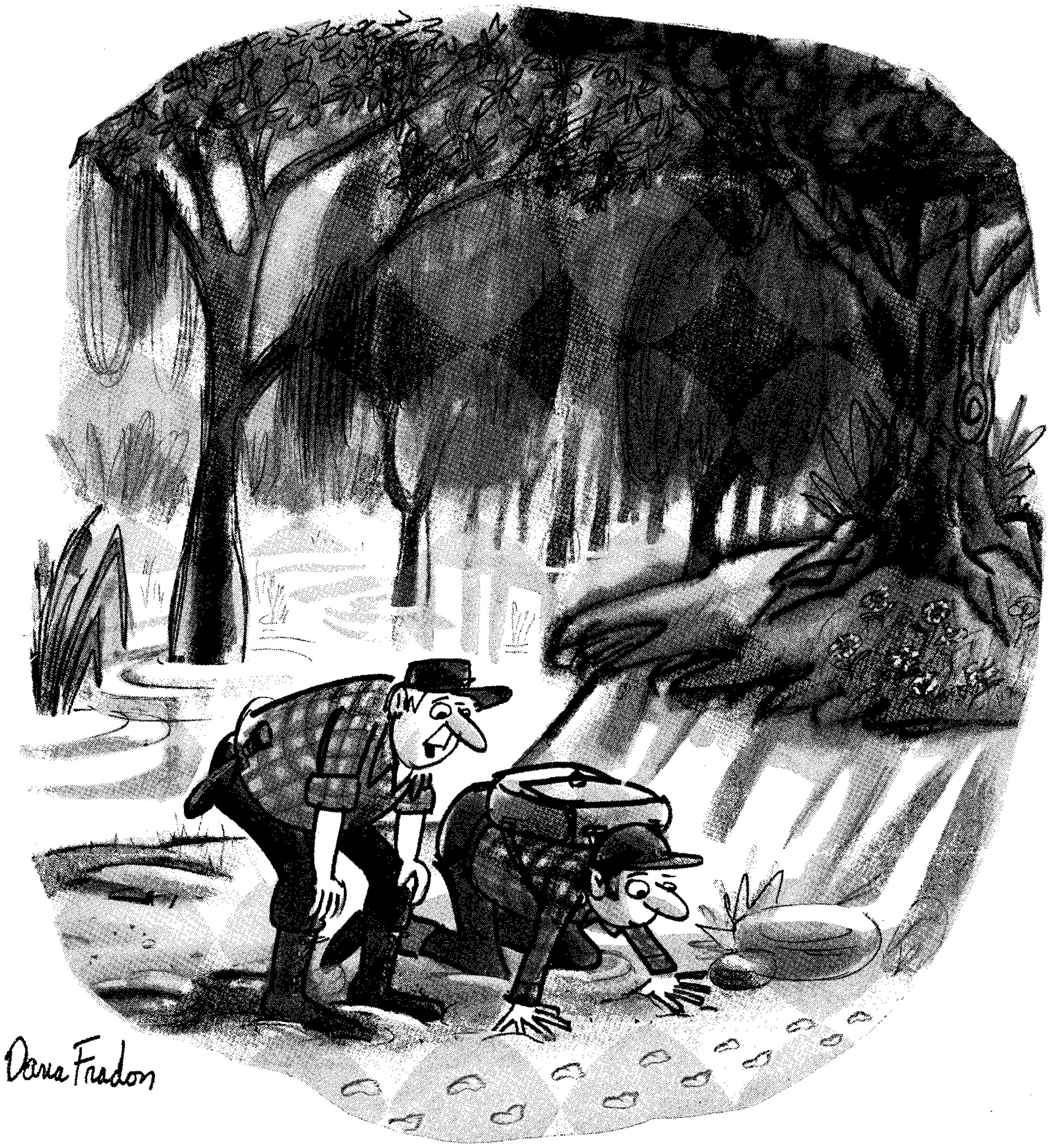
> going through your collection of old toys and comic books. And the doll house which worked. And being measured against a wall twice a year to see how I was growing. And swimming with you at the beach. And planting bell peppers in the shape of a bell.

"Do I have to answer all of these?" he asks, honestly bewildered. "They should have saved their money."

He starts a list of all the things that wait to be done, undone by his absence, but there are so many things *to* do; stretches out briefly, instead, on the old green blanket and snores into his favorite cottony pillow. Furnace trouble, the bad spot in the living room, black squirrel in the attic? Call Bill the auto mechanic, Bill the plumber. Feed the birds. Feed the plumber, pay the Bills. The convalescent man wipes out thirty-six debts in one afternoon and, running out of checks or money before steam, puts stamps on fifty clean envelopes.

His wife brings up an African violet for his bedchamber, the least furnished in the house, but he sends it back—"Makes it look like a sickroom." Nowhere to put it anyway. She sits on the green blanket. He sits at a scratched but valuable drop-leaf table covered with stationery, books, memos to himself, cigarette ashes, trading stamps, and coupons—the paraphernalia required for running a house from a sickroom—on the tippy armchair with a tear in the cushion concealed by a striped beach towel. Besides the bed and the table and chair, the room contains a chest of drawers, a bookcase, books ("Gardens Are for Eating," the Wise Garden Encyclopedia, Ivy Compton-Burnett, "Alec Templeton's Music Boxes," "The History of Jazz," "Times Three," "The Memorial History of Hartford County, Connecticut" in two volumes, "Understanding Surgery," "I Remember America," "How Things Work," "Know Your Roses," "An Illustrated History of Doll's Houses," "Glimpses of Ancient Windsor," "Instant Weather Forecasting," nineteen volumes of the Pelican Shakespeare, "The Story of the Great Naturalists," "Papillon," a missal, the latest Agatha Christie), and a wobbly standing lamp he can move from the table to the bed, with a frayed extension cord, which people sometimes trip over. The rug is his nightstand, resting place for library books he is currently reading, *Scientific American*, *Time*, and a plastic water pitcher he's lifted from the hospital and found most useful. There's one picture on the wall, an etching of a twilit Colonial country house in winter, with the moon rising behind it; though mirrors are in every other room he finds the screen of the portable TV set on the dresser serves adequately when he wants to see himself ("And how do you find yourself this morning, Ben?" "Oh, I just looked in the TV screen and there I was").

The rest of the dresser top is mostly taken up by his pill collection. Out in the hall is the electric percolator he got with supermarket trading stamps, after devoting one whole day to pasting them into the booklets in orderly rows. At night, they fill it up and set it on the marble-topped hall table, with cups, spoons, and paper napkins on a tray beside it, and a small jar of apricot preserves, which he apparently likes to eat directly from the jar. He



"One thing's sure. It isn't Big Foot."

keeps the milk pitcher on the outside windowsill of his room at night so the milk won't spoil. Mornings he feels best, recharged and confident. The blue jays in the pines wake him early, and he drinks his coffee standing in the hall, after he's dressed but before he shaves, waiting for the paper and the morning mail, and sometimes the doctor, *to answer his questions:*

Convalescence
- (1) Gauze pads
- (2) Chance of repeat adhesions
  - (3) Expect discomfort?
    - if so, how much?
  - (4) Luminal doesn't work
  - (5) Best sleep yet last night
  - (6) Stitches itch?

Lucky it's winter, a time when you can relax and take care of details, take care of yourself, too, because you're still needed, so it's not egotism but really charitable to pace yourself as the doctor advised.

- (a) How often up stairs?
- (b) When drive
- (c) When garden?

He rests between tasks, even naps, and finds it almost pleasant, though dangerous—no, not dangerous, because *I'm doing what's good for me,* getting well. But horses if they lie down may never get up again.

He sends away for the Burpee's catalogue, and orders books on genealogy and family history from the library, and one called "How to Repair Your Old Organ" because the title tickles him.

As often as the doctor allows, he patrols the house, taking stock: is astounded by the junk they've acquired, and plans to inventory the cartons, the collections, the coins, music boxes, stamps, butterflies, which will interest the grandchildren now they're getting older. Always, *last thing at night,* he makes sure all downstairs lights are out and locks up, because even in the suburbs you want to discourage unwelcome guests. But she wakes, footsteps overhead—he's gotten up to hunt through the attic for that box with the travel folders.

And visitors do come, though the room isn't set up for them. The visiting nurse, come to check up, lingers for an hour. Or what seems like it. A sister from Iowa drops in and stays for a month. One daughter or the other always seems to be around, sitting on the foot of the bed or, if he should happen to be in it, the armchair with the striped towel.

They talk real estate, and moving, and money, which the young ones never seem to have quite enough of. When did he ever think about money? Actually, they haven't done badly. "Someday, of course, all this will be yours," pointing with a cigarette to the bare walls and bulging closets. "We never spent more than we earned, saved something every year, to invest." But young people live differently—he can grasp intellectually the concept that going into debt to a bank is a way to save money and a help to the economy, but he's a Depression adolescent. His son-in-law, the lawyer, who helped draw up the will years ago, offers to look over the Portfolio, and he likes the idea. Someone who really understands, getting a second opinion, tossing it lightly into younger hands. Wakes at night and thinks of things to show them all, and cannot rest again until he digs them out.

He takes his medicine like a good soldier, taping an increasingly elaborate schedule to the inside of a bureau drawer: for His Eyes Only. Sleeping Tablet, yellow, 2 per night, 1 mo's refill. Red pill. Blue pill. Gantrisin. Luminal. Erythromycin for a passing cold, Terpin hydrate for the smoker's cough, aspirin just for fun. Religiously, a rosary of pills, like the prayers of his youth—indulgences, novenas, the Angelus, the First Fridays. Established, efficacious order; their efficacy *is in your belief.* Though he hasn't been to Mass in years, his faith has never been more secure. He sits in his dressing gown and stares at the television without turning it on, believing and waiting—for the newspaper, for an operation, for spring, for tomorrow.

The blue jays scream in the dense evergreens that shade the window of his room where flowers do not grow, green cavern with the blinky lamp lit even at noon. The days are getting longer, though, sun through the solstice, heading for the equinox. It's been a mild winter. He tells the temperature of the day by the rhododendrons far below his window, *their hangdog leaves* relaxed and feeble in the warmer weather. On cold days they furl and rattle like green fingers, like icy hands. The pink pills are helping some.

IT IS

The sky's blue and clear usually;
one white star quivers at the top of the bedroom window.
We lie here nights, looking at it,
amazed by existence. Millie says
it's wonderful to see it burning there,
to lie close to each other in bed and just watch it.
She slips a leg under mine, rubs her foot against mine,
sighs, before sleep. *I can see a flake of that wild*
steadiness through her eye when I look over, and it stays there.
When Plato says
we fear death because we think life's important,
he means we should see ourselves
in the star, now.
                                        I dress and wash. The trees
don't have any leaves. Sparrows hop among the branches,
seeking a crumb, discovering our feeder stocked with seed.
Crick crick crick comes from the porch where I hung it.
When they feel me spying on them they spurt away,
and I sit down to write this,
their brief persistent cries all around me,
coming from the trees, coming from the air, coming
from the wires and cornices where they sit.
                                                                        Look.
It begins to rain. Drops grow on the small branches,
slip off and come back and slip off again, a
stuttering on the roofs and panes.
                                                        What struggles,
what we call ours, noise like voices from high
or low in the house, something so deep in us
it is us takes over.

—Stephen Berg

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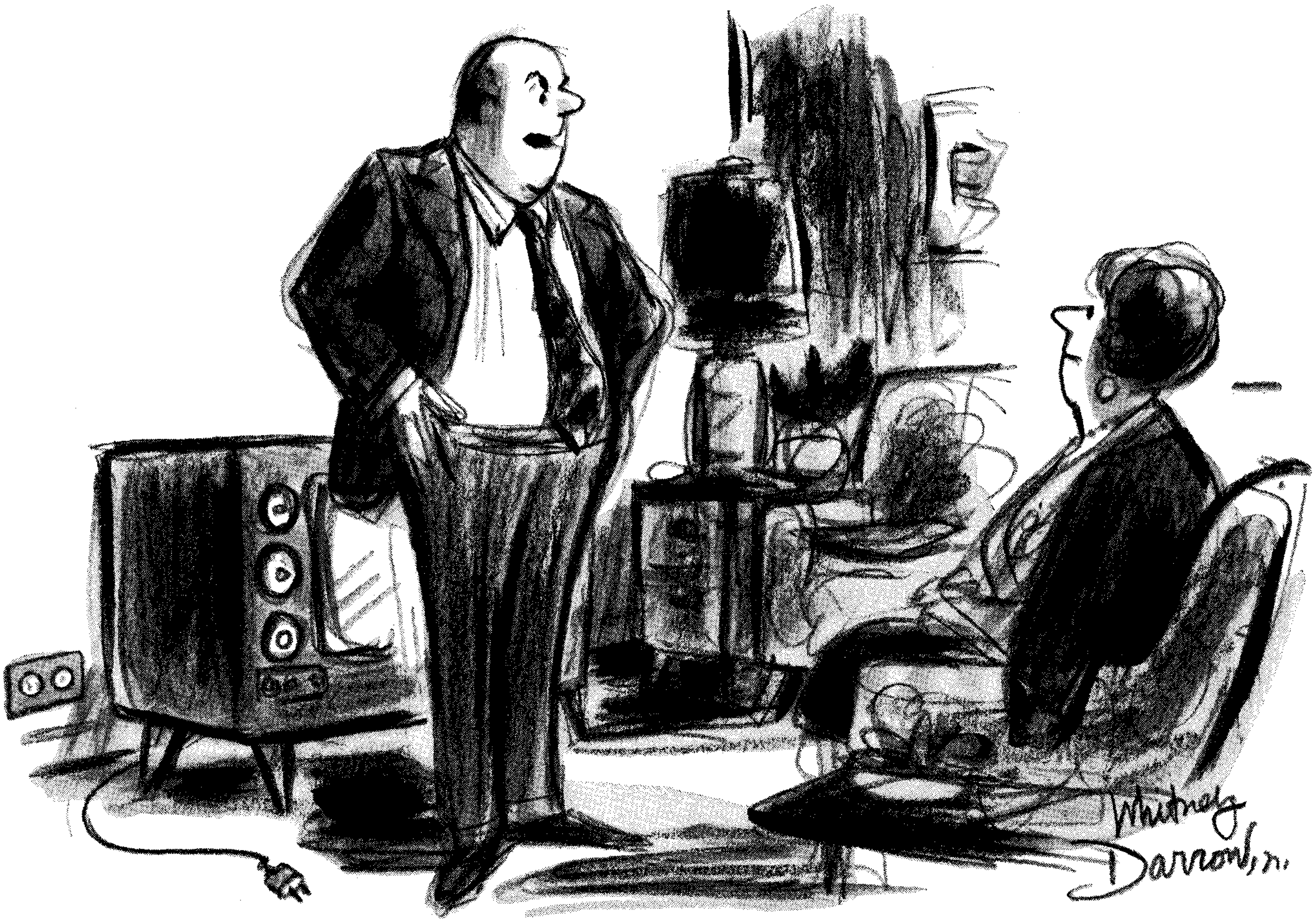

Whitney Darrow, Jr.

"So here we are, Lucille. Down to basics. You and me."

• •

One morning, to his surprise, the rhododendron leaves are tight as closed umbrellas and he can't wake up. He can't wake up, and coffee doesn't work. He roams methodically upstairs and down, hoping to shake off the condition. At noon he sits down in his chair to try and figure it out. "I think I've got the Blind Staggers," he tells whichever relative has come in to see how he's doing.

"The pills," they reassure him. "All that medication must be playing whoopee with your system."

"They enhance each other, there's a cumulative effect."

Water on the brain. "I can't wake up." Shakes his head and lifts his hands as if pushing something away. "Too many pills. Maybe you're right. Maybe if I stop taking them for a day."

Their voices bounce around like echoes in a shower stall, one that is filling up with steam. With much courage, he gets up out of his chair and walks to the bed. Whistles wonderingly, and tries to shake his head. "I hope *dying* isn't anything like this."

Then he does nap and wakes to take nourishment—hands and murmurs, soft-boiled eggs and buttered toast. The air has darkened, like the Iowa sky where a tornado is originating, like the passenger pigeons coming on 1,000,000,000 wings.

When it is actually dark out, he surfaces from his bad dream. Someone he recognizes is standing under the lamp. "Turn it on," he whispers. "Don't tell her, but I lost my lunch. Eggs, medication, and last night's dinner, and probably yesterday's lunch, too. I feel better. Much better. It's been this lodestone around my neck. The pump. I felt the pain of it in the back of my throat while I was sleeping."

"Taken your temperature?"

"Normal." Skin white and papery. A hand to the forehead.

"Oh, this has been the worst day of my life," he says as he drops off again.

They call the doctor at a cocktail party. He tells them not to worry, he'll come in tomorrow, and tomorrow doesn't remember that they called. But "What a fool I've been," says the invalid. "I've caught a little cold again, that's all. Just a touch of flu." His face is pink again, flushed with relief. "In a few days I'll be right as rain."

Turning and turning the fact of death like a pebble in the pocket of his dressing gown, worn smooth through fingering, getting acquainted with the surfaces, the weight, smooth, compact, hard.

A cold spell. Too chilly to putter in the basement, where the hyacinths are finally putting up green tips, too hot in the attic. Disposall on the fritz. All one night they're kept awake by the creaking and snapping of branches being murdered by an ice storm, wind, freezing rain, and temperature hovering at thirty-one. Loose twigs obstruct the gutter, the bathroom shower stops up again. He postpones calling the plumber, the plasterer, and, in disgraceful pajamas and two pairs of socks, dozes off over accounts of wars his ancestors fought in.

Then comes a day when he lifts the coffee cup to his lips and realizes, positively, he's going to get well. The son-in-law driving out from New York to look over the estate papers. The daughter with the grandchildren. All is in order, stocks, Portfolio papers, will he searched half the night for, some ancient comic books for the little boys. At ten he has another round of coffee. By lunch he's not really hungry, can't keep his mind on his plate, listening for the car in the driveway, the phone to ring.

At three he goes to the cellar, waters the hyacinths, which could use some, and plays a few bars of Gershwin. At four o'clock he goes upstairs, and lies down, fully dressed. Nobody comes and nobody calls. I must have got the day wrong. Just as well. The trembly feeling in the back of my legs. Maybe if I go back to the hospital and rest there, shake off this cold.

At six o'clock he is ready.

IN the eye of the storm, I rest. I am getting worse, I am getting better. What was life like? No matter. Everything taken care of, no need for the lists, nurses bring trays, the doctor pops in to answer questions at least once a day.

He walks to the end of the corridor and back, trailing the catheter tube over his arm.

Body stirs: It hurts somewhere inside, guts, lights, liver?

Needle comes when I feel like it, sometimes even when I don't. Put it off before their visit, listen hard to what they say. Hope they don't stay long. Talk to the morning nurse about her grandchildren, and the afternoon nurse about horse races, smoke, eat when they wheel in the tray, wait for visiting hours, my wife, my children on weekends, the shot, sleep. No twinges any longer.

Like a stone in the pocket, handling in the darkness. Why am I frightened?

HE is aroused when they come, frequently now, and is grateful to the neighbors who drive his wife in their car since his broke down, eager for her news. How the house is doing without him, his hyacinths, what the neighbors and the neighbors' children are up to. He opens his daily ration of mail from home, and reads to her the amusing messages on the get-well cards that have come to the hospital, holding them nearsightedly up to his nose. His hands (with such clean fingernails) tap rhythms on the white sheets; she kisses goodbye, leaning with some difficulty over the chrome rail around the bed. Nurse Logan bustles in. Pop goes the needle.

“IT can't be long now.”

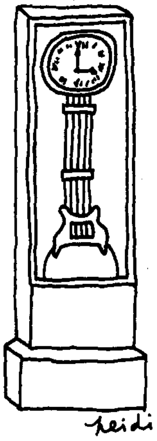
“When?”

“Finley says, a matter of days.”

He's on the Critical List. Visitors may come any time.

Get to the bank, get the money out of the joint checking account, get new checks. Get the signatures, get power of attorney. Get ready to answer if he asks. What could they say?

Upon his breakfast tray, a pamphlet to say “God Loves the Sick.” Followed by the hospital priest, who wants to hear his confession. What have I to confess? “For your penance say one Hail Mary.” Then gives him Communion, a treat instead of a treatise. The taste of pabulum, dead bread, though said to be living God. Do they have intravenous Communion for patients with signs on their doors, “Nothing by Mouth”?



High-spirited, keyed up by the drugs. Blood count dropping. Should he have a transfusion?

Should he die sooner or later?

“Doctor, I feel *apprehensive.*”

(Why am I so frightened?)

“Relax, Ben, you're just a little toxic.”

His front toenails are inch-long talons that have worked through his socks. Knees, flexed under the sheet, tremble. “They should give you a pedicure.”

“I asked the night temporary. And do you know what she told me? It's against the rules.”

“Only for preemies,” butts in the afternoon nurse, coming in with coffee and a pot of salvia.

“She asked me if I wanted tea and I didn't, so I said, ‘I'm allergic.’ ‘Oh, shall I put that on your chart?’ ”

“Help! help!” cries the woman in the bed across the hall.

One of the visitors goes out to the desk. “The woman in 559 has been calling for some time.”

“Yes, the doctors were pumping her out. She's under sedation and doesn't really know.”

Though he says her cries don't bother him, they shut the door anyway. One of them sucks on a cough drop, and he asks if he can have one, too. “In addition to everything *else*, I swallowed a filling and it's made a sore place on my tongue.”

Friday he charms the hospital dentist into installing a temporary filling. His elder daughter arrives in a doozie of a snowstorm and tells him the hyacinths are about out and how good he looks. Very much the way he was, in fact—rosy-cheeked and bristling white hair.

“Wish I felt as well as I looked.”

She is celebrating an achievement and offers him Scotch out of a Tulip cup, which he pretends to sip—he hasn't smoked in two days or eaten for four. “What happened to the woman across the hall?” she asks.

“She got better.”

He tells her to crank up the top of the bed so he can see her, and congratulates her on the good news. “You know, you've gone farther than anyone in your class!” Before the night nurse is due to arrive, he remembers to call the downstairs desk to get his daughter a taxi. The minute she goes he thinks of things for her to do, and to his companion of the night dictates a list

Cornelia
Hyacinths
Solarium
Train?
socks
Myron
collaterals

before settling down to slumber.

Next morning they give him the first shot of morphine. Happily he babbles to his younger daughter. “You must have the Steinway for your new apartment. I'll give the boys lessons. They are grand children.”

“You're a grand father.”

“They take after their father.”

When the visitors all come again at noon they find him out of bed, sitting up in a chair, beak-nosed and looking taller. His wife sits and holds his hand while the male nurse brings in lunch on a tray. He doesn't eat it. “Yes, oh yes, thank you,” he gasps, glad of her arm helping him back to bed. They sit in the room that's for waiting in.

“He's been telling me all week what a good wife I've been.”

After a while they go in to kiss his cheek, warm and scratchy. He is babbling again, toasting a whole crowd of them, a veritable master of ceremonies, a *tummler*. “How nice,” he says. “Thank you.” It would be a shame to try and rouse him.

He doesn't recognize the dentist. The nurses that evening are shocked by the change. Suppose they had aroused him from that morphine stupor, why, he'd have looked at them and smiled “How nice” again. And they'd have kissed him again and said, “See you again, sweetie.” And he'd have closed his eyes and recommenced his urgent, peaceful whispering. Perhaps he was making a list.

—JULIE HAYDEN

•

Kristy Hackett, 18, a brunette with matching brown eyes, was picked yesterday as queen of the 1975 Grand National Junior Livestock Exposition.—*San Francisco Sunday Examiner & Chronicle.*

A combination like that spells a sure winner.

THE TWENTIES

(FROM NOTEBOOKS AND DIARIES OF THE PERIOD)

New York to Newark on the Way to Red Bank or Princeton

IT is a country forever tarnished by a dingy haze of dampness and smoke. At the foot of the hill lies a vast marsh of swamp grass, bleached by the fall, with patches still persisting in a feeble verdancy and with stagnant pools corrupted by a vivider green; the whole of this dead meadow is laced with telephone wires and occasionally traversed by muddy roads that seem to be foundering. The one touch of color and life was the series of large board signs that advertised New York hotels and theatres, underclothes, candy, and shaving soaps. Then one saw the factories with tapering smokestacks; one of them had four chimneys and lay like a ship in the marsh. The landscape bristled with chimneys and with cranes along the railroad tracks. And there were human habitations: feeble-looking houses, unpainted and gray, which, but for an occasional line of clothes drying in the tainted air, would have seemed bleached to as complete a death as the sea they were islanded in. At last, after ten minutes' ride in a world of factories, one reaches a body of water, perfectly black and still, where the hulk of an old steamboat, as black as the river, has been rotting and sinking slowly for several years and shows only its warped upper deck and its blackened wheel. This is Newark Bay, and the city is Newark: more factories here, but jammed together; small factories and machine shops, pattern-makers and electro-platers, press close beside the train—manufacturers of castings, blowpipes, paints, chemicals, mattresses, fountain pens, ketchup, refrigerators, phonographs, bacon, chewing gum, safety razors, cigarettes, carpet sweepers, licorice drops, flours, letter openers, typewriters, umbrellas. The city and the bay produce a curious impression of mingled life and death: there is business—one can see that; there is a lot of work being done; there is prosperity in the cheap stores and solid buildings. But in the dirtiness of the streets, the dull colors of the city, the lack of any sign of a love for cleanness or brightness, the impression of life grown heavy and sordid in those thousands of brick-walled rooms behind those dirty windows, one felt that death was rotting and blackening the city, as it had that old steamboat hulk that no one had thought to destroy or save.

At Perth Amboy

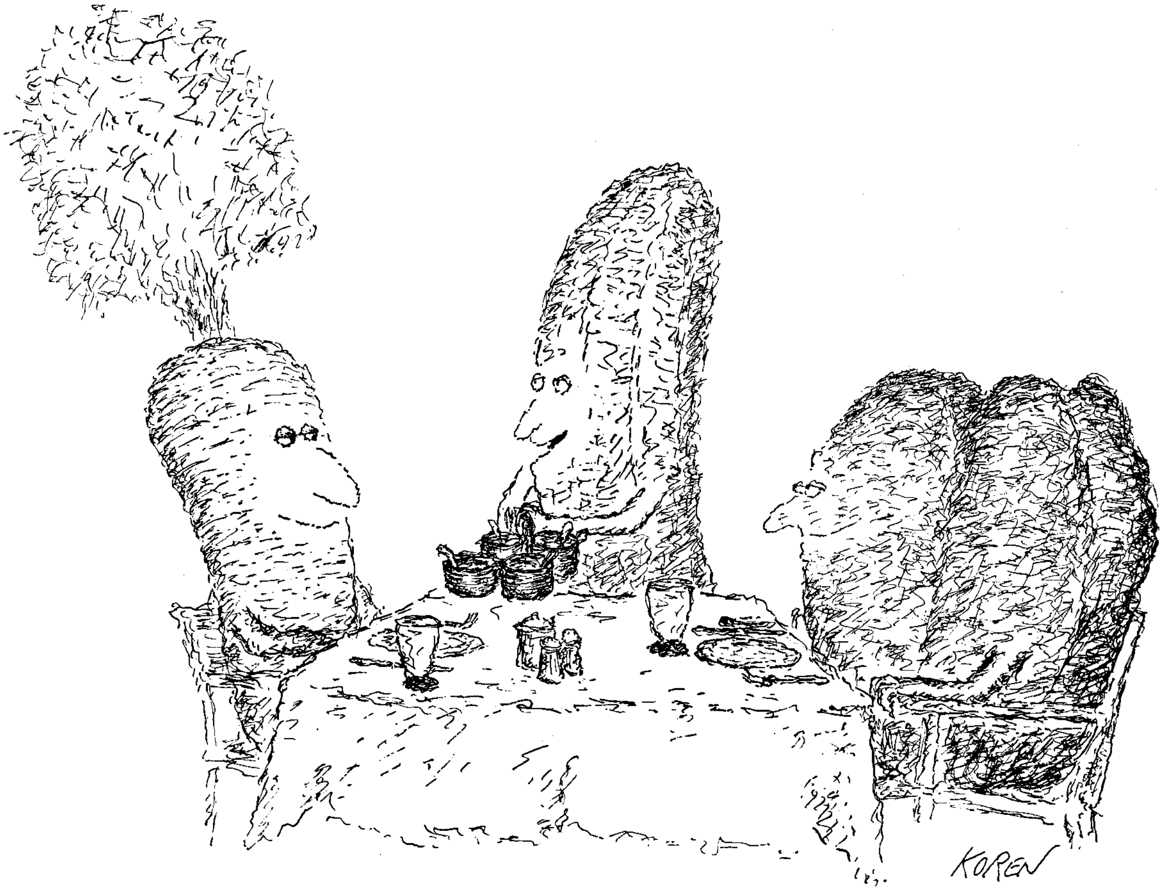
ONE saw something like a great common, full of mangy bare spots in the thin, dirty grass; it seemed partly to be used as a dumping ground for refuse, for it was strewn with tin cans and papers; beyond these were frame houses, which, but for the smoke from their chimneys, might have seemed, like the papers and cans, old rubbish worn out and thrown away and defaced by the weather out of all recognition as things that had once served human life.

The Skyscrapers in November

FROM the Jersey City ferry, on a gray morning of November, the skyscrapers stood out distinctly in a hard light and seemed no more dignified, but only larger, than the hideous utilitarian buildings of the small towns—like them, of the drabbest and most grimy colors and of a square, machine-made architecture that excluded imagination.

Johnstown, Pennsylvania, Etc.

IN a valley, which brims with smoke as if it were a vessel, a huge-chimneyed blast furnace dominates everything else—the muddy and turbulent little stream and the bare smoke-colored houses perched along the barren hillside. On a bank lie great husks of scrap iron like the fragments of carcasses. Between those iron hills one can see nothing that is not desolate. The forests have been burnt away and left only a few blackened spikes, as if it were a battlefield in the late war. The towns of the Middle West, like Gary, and of western Pennsylvania, like Altoona, are even more completely sordid and crass than eastern towns like Elizabeth, which at least catch a faint metropolitan atmosphere from the proximity of New York, whereas those other places, in their flatness and coarseness, seem the natural products of a peasantry richer, to be sure, than that older



"French, Italian, Russian, or Thousand Island?"

one which lived on the land but one which is incapable of imagining or desiring anything better than this dingy, crude, and colorless material life.

•

I HAVE sometimes thought that there is a great man locked up in Eugene Hecker. [He was a friend of my Army days. His grandfather had played a role in the '48 revolution.] If so, the locks have tightened and hardened with age, and, having always kept so firm a hand on himself and never let himself go, he will probably never do so. The Army and the war convinced him, he said, that humanity was not worth dying for, and yet he comes near to being the type of man who does die for humanity. It is really priggishness which stands in his way in this as in little things. Still, he might be a great Puritan.

New Year's Eve

THE dinner party belowstairs began with the popping of corks and the braying of a phonograph; about one in the morning, the company were apparently on the crest of the wave. When the phonograph was played, I could hear what sounded like a large, heavy man joining loudly in the refrain of the melody. After every burst, he would stop and laugh boorishly at his own clumsy efforts, surprised that his exhilaration should have tricked him into enjoying so unfamiliar and ludicrous a thing as music.

[Scott] Fitzgerald

"I'LL tell you what the situation is now: I wouldn't care if she [Zelda] died, but I couldn't stand to have anybody else marry her."

(He did marry Zelda not long after. John [Bishop] and I were invited to meet her at the Fitzgeralds' hotel. We drank Orange Blossoms, a kind of cocktail then in vogue. Zelda was lying on her back on a couch, looking very pretty and languid. When I reminded her of this years later, I found that she was rather embarrassed to remember the too fancy clothes with which her mother had outfitted her—they were appropriate for a Southern belle but not the right thing for New York. She was still apologetic about her mother.)

"When I'm with John [Bishop], I say: 'Well, John, you and I are the only real artists,' and when I'm with Aleck McKaig, I say: 'You and I are the only ones who understand the common man,' and when I'm with Townsend [Martin], I say: 'Well, Townsend, you and I are the only ones who are really interested in ourselves,' but when I'm alone, I say: 'Well, Fitz, you're the only one!' "

Imagination and the Unusual

THE reason that more unusual and startling things are not done is not that they are particularly impracticable but that most people have not the imaginations to conceive them.

•

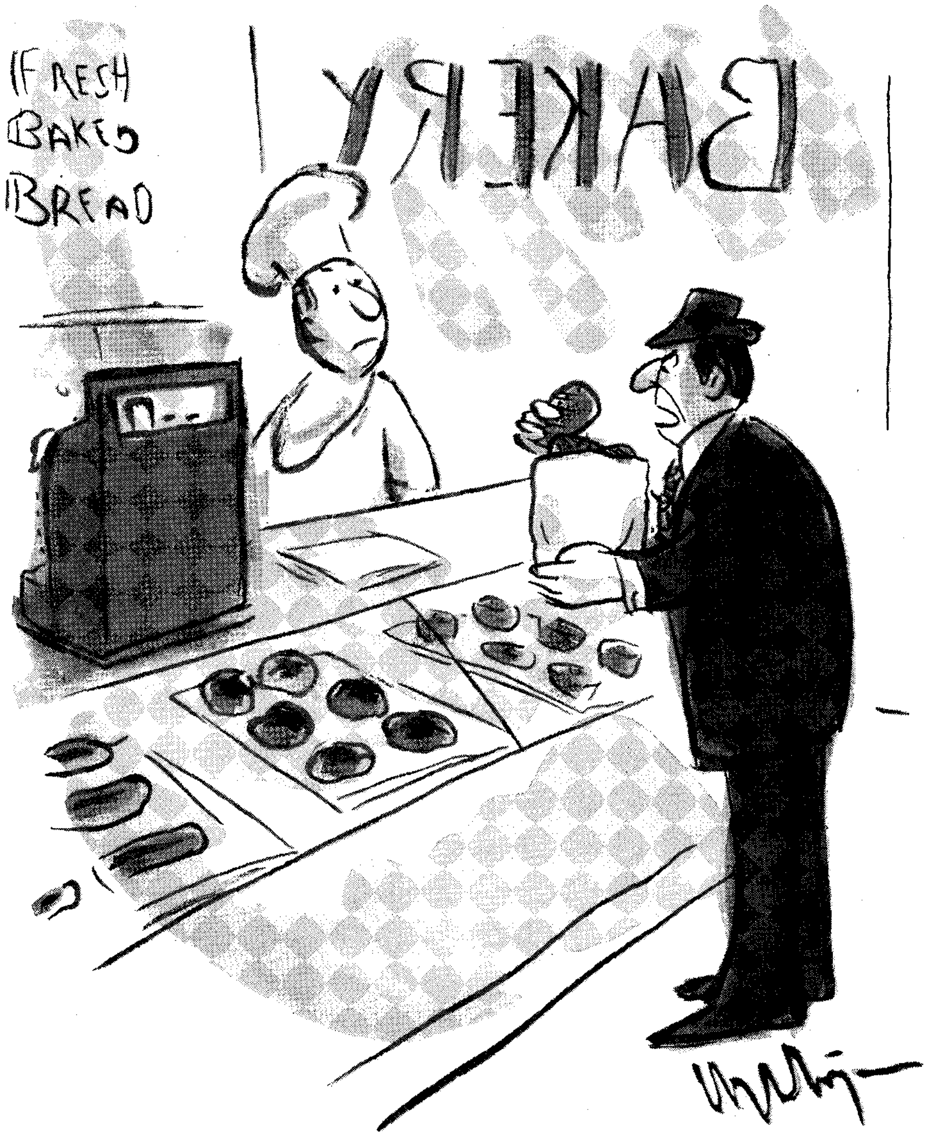
SHAW is the greatest master of literary sleight of hand the world has ever known: give him a platitude, and in the twinkling of an eye he will transform it into a paradox.

•

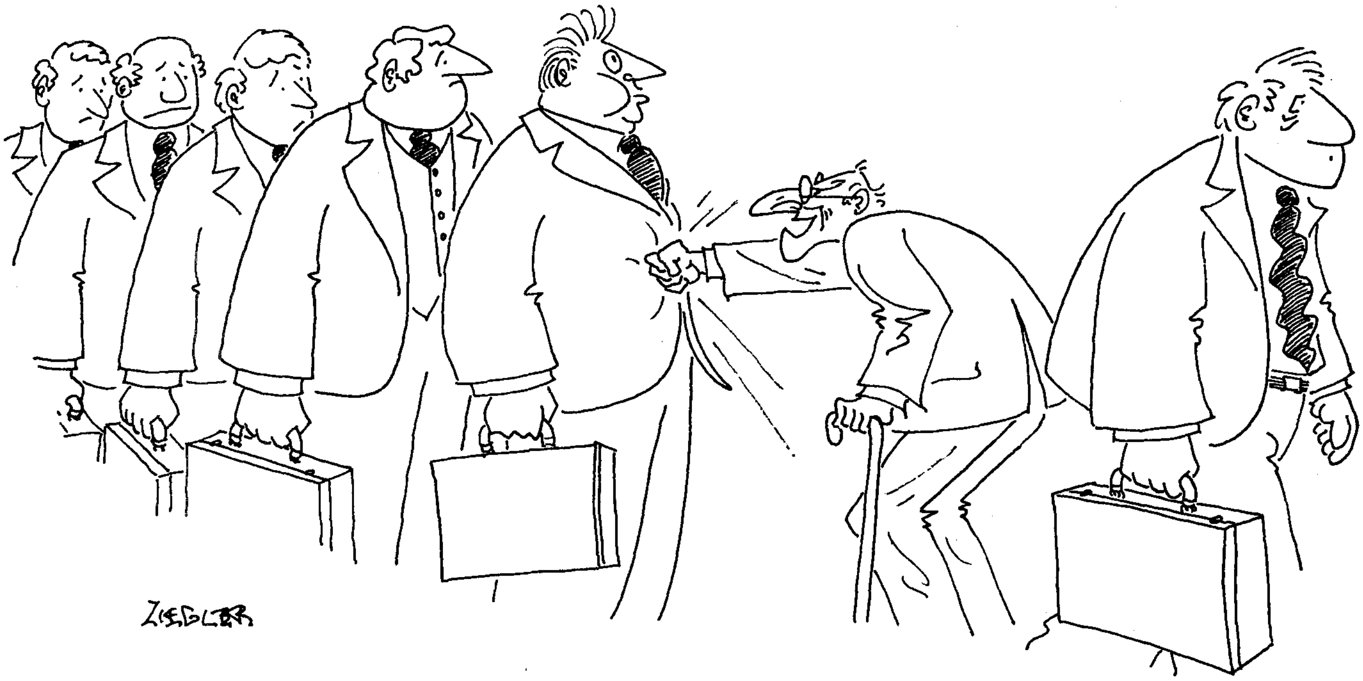
I HAD just met Edna Millay and was full of her. I sent her a copy of the following poem, and when I saw her again, she said, "That was a strange poem you sent me." Rereading it now, I see how strange it *was*, as well as how extremely bad. These early poems are quite embarrassing. John Bishop used to say that it always made him nervous when I resorted to a high-romantic vein.

When I motored down to Princeton on May Day
With John Bishop and Scott Fitzgerald
And we saw the mist of green that hung in the trees and fields
And when we rode into the town with gilt wreaths on our heads,
Singing a rag of Swinburne,
There was something running in my mind
Deeper than the spring and the laughter;
For I could not forget your poems
And the things I had heard about you
And your face that was sometimes a flower
But more often a flame.

Poor Fitz went prancing into the Cottage Club
With his gilt wreath and lyre,
Looking like a tarnished Apollo with the two black eyes
That he had got, when far gone in liquor, in some unintelligible fight,
But looking like Apollo just the same, with the sun in his pale yellow hair;
And his classmates who had been roaring around the campus all day
And had had whiskey, but no Swinburne,
Arose as one man and denounced him



"Since when is a baker's dozen eleven?"



"Can you take it, Morrison? I like my men to be able to take it."

• •

And told him that he and his wife had disgraced the club and that he was no longer worthy to belong to it
(Though really they were angry with him
Because he had achieved great success
Without starting in at the bottom in the nut-and-bolt business).
At any rate, he was dreadfully hurt
And felt he could interpret himself no longer
In the face of such a philistine and hostile audience,
And he went straight back to New York
By the 7 o'clock train.
And when they told me about it, the humanism
We had come down to celebrate
Seemed scarcely real to me:
I could think of nothing but the cruelty
At the roots of life;
And the thought drove all the dreams from my head
With its sharp sword—
And Princeton fell away
And there seemed to be nothing real
Among intangible shadows,
Except a light here and there, a light I had known of old,
And your flame in New York
That that cruelty did but feed.
I sat in a bare room
Talking to Christian Gauss
And watching his clear green eyes, as hard and as fine as gems;
I heard him speak of books and politics and people,
With his incredible learning and his cloudless mind,
But he was really talking of life
As something that made him suffer
But about which he could not tell lies
Nor tell other people lies—
(For he could not make moral judgments nor praise inferior things);
And I thought of him, as I have always done, as a short stocky naked man
Holding an impossible post
At the edge of an abyss,
With bleak and uncontrollable storms
Crashing about him,
While he stood without panic or complaint,
Looking out with straight hard eyes,
A last champion of man's divine pride of reason and imagination
Against all that tumult and stone....
And Princeton that I had loved was nothing to me:
I was swearing again an oath I had many times sworn already:
That, so long as I should live, I should honor nothing but Gauss
With his back against the rock—
But, while I swore, your bitter beauty
Filled the room,
And I saw it was you who were standing
Against the rock,
Who were taking the hurricane
On your "fierce and trivial" brow.

The mist of green, as we motored back, meant almost as little to me
As the gray and barren streets of Weehawken and Newark;
And Hardwick Nevin was telling me things about you
That he didn't understand.

•

EDNA on the machine-carved mantelpiece in our apartment: "Ah, that mantelpiece! It's like life: there's been so much work and care put in on it, and then look at it!"

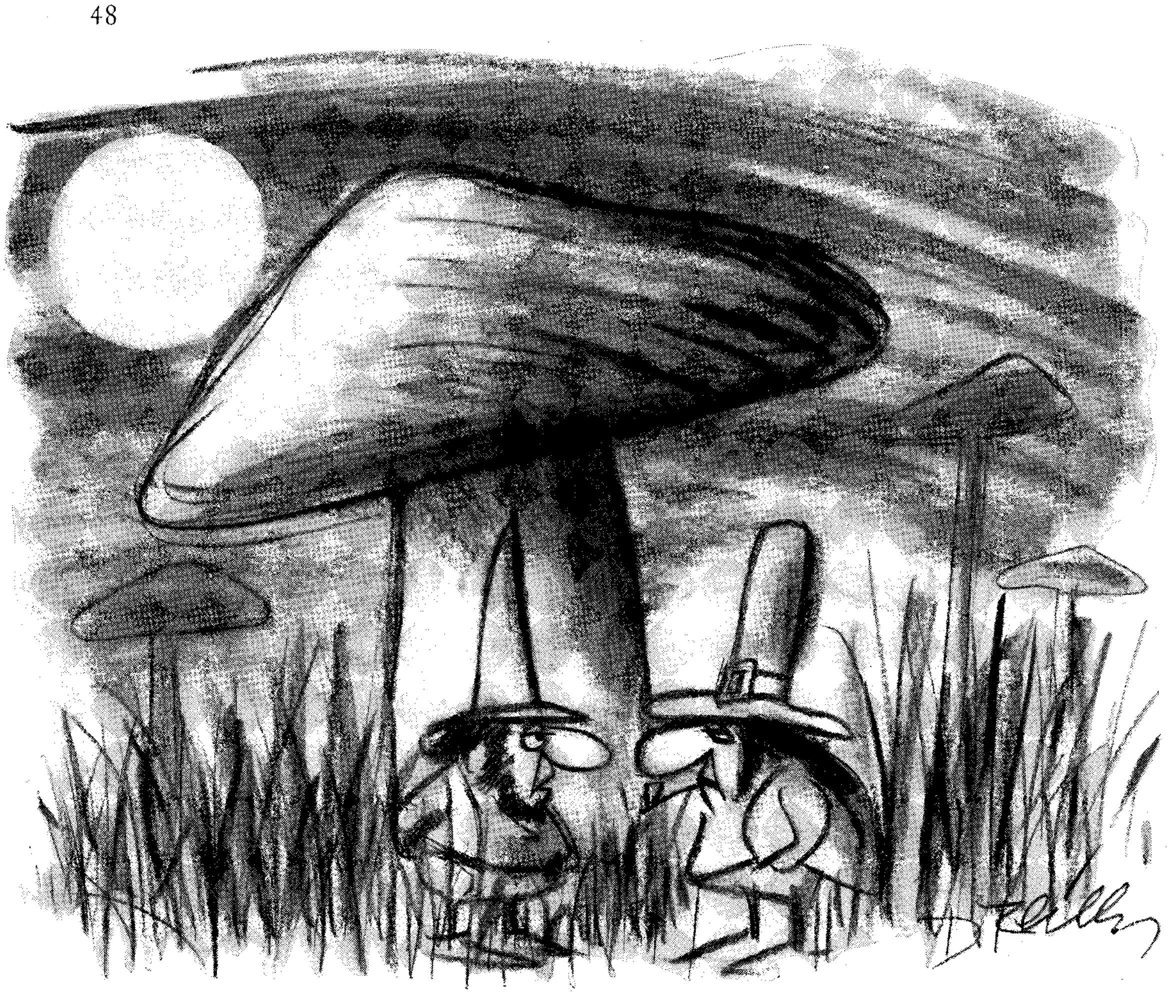
[CHRISTIAN] GAUSS

E. W.: "I come down here for comfort and assurance when I am particularly overcome by life—to recuperate. Because you are familiar with all the same phenomena as I am, and you yet remain calm."

C. G.: "Oh, I see! But you don't want to mistake that calm for the serenity of philosophy. It's really only senility."

[H. L.] MENCKEN

THE first time I met him—at the Coffee House—he suggested to Owen Johnson and W. L. George that perhaps women didn't really have an enormous influence on men's lives, that anything a man really had to do would probably get itself done anyway without being much affected by the women who came into his life. "Yet no novelist would ever think of telling about his hero without telling about his women. There's 'Barry Lyndon,' of course, and 'Huckleberry Finn,' and some of Conrad." The second time I met him was in the street; I steered him on and off the "L" and down to Sixteenth Street. He talked much about *The New Republic*, which, he thought, had been "sick" but was now recovering. The third time was when he summoned me to *The Smart Set* about "The Undertaker's Garland," a book by John Bishop and me, which we had sent to him. [George Jean] Nathan was lighting his cigar, and he explained, "This is Mr. Nathan, my secretary: he lights my cigars for me." They made me sit down between them in a chair narrowly fitted in between the two desks with its back against the wall. Mencken, in his shirtsleeves, had his feet on the desk. We had a very good idea there, he thought. Here were two young men who had undertaken to spit in the eye of Death, treat it as



"Rhetoric aside, who do you think will really do the most for the little people—George Wallace, Fred Harris, Jimmy Carter, Scoop Jackson, or Mo Udall?"

• •

a joke. But we needed something very sardonic, he thought—something about the physical side of death. For instance, he saw a good deal of the doctors at Johns Hopkins, and they told him that, out of the whole number of autopsies performed, it was evident in about eighty per cent of the cases that the diagnosis of the disease had been wrong. (This was rather horrible, of course!) Another idea: the death of an archbishop. The archbishop is about to die, and he begins to think about his life. He thinks: "Well, now I'm going to die, I wonder if it was really worthwhile; there was that beautiful girl I passed up back in the eighties. And then, all the weddings I've been to, where I was kind of a killjoy. I'd have to perform the service and leave afterwards before the guests could have any fun. And now I've read a book by Huxley that proves there's nothing in the whole business, and I'm going to Hell anyhow. It's been proved that the Old Testament was written by Rabelais, the whole thing is a joke." I said that he ought to write that himself. "Well," he replied, "no man can give another man an idea." He confessed that he hadn't read the poems: he found as he got older that he became less and less able to read long poems. The first time he strikes an inversion, he thinks it would have been better in prose. . . . Nathan interjected sharp bits of badinage; one felt he was much less spontaneous than Mencken. When I told them that the Fitzgeralds were going to have a baby, Mencken said, "Good!," and Nathan remarked that it would probably be a cross between the Ziegfeld Follies and Moore's restaurant.

On the Rue du Four

THE crash of the market trucks going to the Halles in the very early morning made the whole room vibrate, and I, who, even in bed, felt the jolt and the rattle of the vehicles, came to feel as if I were a part of the real life of the city.

•

I HAD letters from [Frank] Crowninshield to Mme. Picabia and Jean Cocteau. Mme. Picabia had organized that summer an outdoor place of entertainment called Le Théâtre de l'Oasis, with Yvette Guilbert and other vedettes of the nineties, which included even Aristide Bruant. I adored Yvette Guilbert, whom I regarded and still regard as one of the great French artists of her time. I spent many evenings at the Oasis, and when it closed I followed her to the Trocadéro, where the theatre was much too large for her and the house was never filled. The French public had not kept pace with her. She had been away for years in New York. She had married an American chemist and conducted an original kind of school for actresses, singers, and diseuses. But during these years she had studied French songs and had much developed and extended her range. The French did not know this, and I somewhat resented their tone when they referred to her as "*une chanteuse de café chantant.*"

She gave them their old favorites, too, in the costume, with long black gloves, celebrated by Toulouse-Lautrec: "Le Fiacre" and "Madame Arthur." But she had also a whole new repertoire of songs from earlier periods, of which she caught the style and accent in a most extraordinary way. Her powers of impersonation were equal to any I have ever seen and were displayed with hardly any change—or none at all—of makeup or coiffure or costume. Her old songs of the nineties were sung with very few staccato words, every syllable of which was made to tell. But, as a beauty of the Renaissance, she conducted an aggressive but ceremonious flirtation:

Dites, dites, dites, dites-moi,
Suis-je, suis-je, suis-je, suis-je belle?

With a childlike simplicity, she rendered a medieval "La Légende de Saint Nicholas." As a *grue* of the Bal Bullier, she inveigled a green young man from the country, telling him, while she waltzed, of the very distin-

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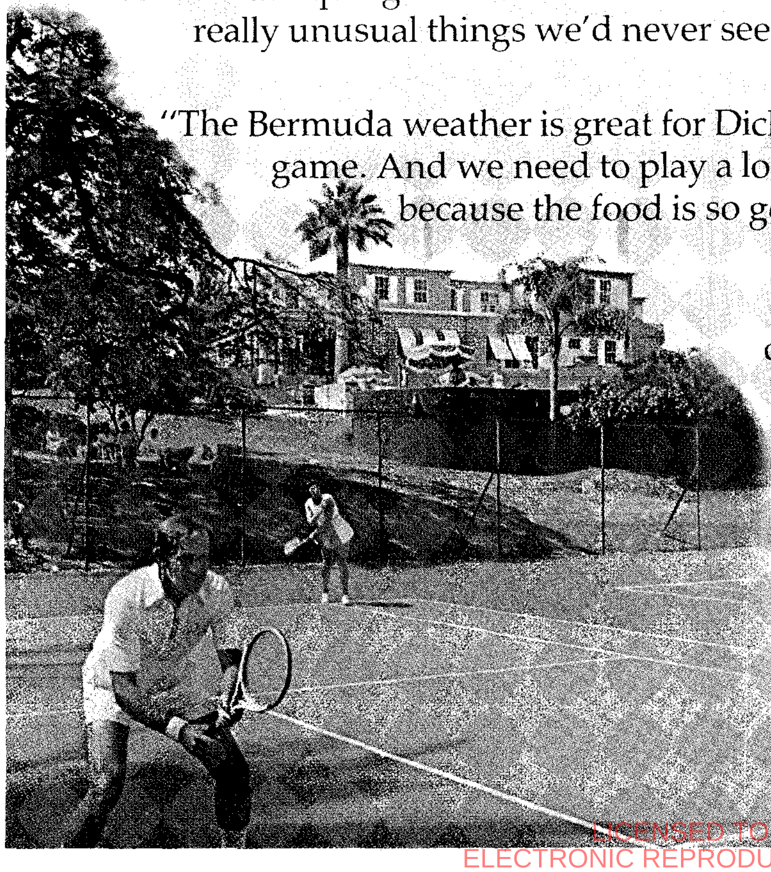
Have you ever seen a grown man cry?

"We like to explore on the motorbikes. Just finding a deserted beach and walking barefoot...I love it."

Adria Miner on the Miners' third visit to Bermuda.

"We went antiquing in Hamilton and found some really unusual things we'd never seen before."

"The Bermuda weather is great for Dick's tennis game. And we need to play a lot of tennis because the food is so good here."



"We like to play darts after dinner and then just sit on the verandah and talk. Or maybe just listen to those tree frogs."

Bermuda

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guished admirers who had thrown themselves at her feet. But

Plaignez, plaignez
La pauvre innocente
Qui n'a jamais, jamais
Connu l'amour.

As the former mistress of Béranger, in a ballad by his successor Bérat, she sat "under the old chestnut tree" and told the young people about her hero. As she recalled her childhood, she made the old woman appear to grow actually youthful and, as she smiled, even pretty:

Si vous saviez, enfants,
Quand j'étais jeune fille,
Comme j'étais gentille!
Je parle de longtemps:
Teint frais, regard qui brille,
Sourire aux blanches dents.
Alors, ô mes enfants!
Alors, ô mes enfants!
Grisette de quinze ans.
Ah! que j'étais gentille!

And she caused Béranger's militant spirit to revive in a swelling echo:

Vous parlerai-je de sa gloire?
Son nom des rois causait l'effroi.

In "Verligodin," she became a tough old peasant woman who seemed almost about to murder her drunken husband, also impersonated by her, who muttered his sulky defensive retorts; in a modern monologue she talked to a former lover whom she had not seen for many years: she recalled their old good times together and the miseries that they had endured; then:

Je vous ai dit, "Je ne vous aime plus—
Désormais je veux r-r-rompre!"

Then, after this declaration, breaking down into a friendly laugh:

Ah, mon ami, t'en souvient-il?

One of her most startling pieces was the woman drunk, "La Soûlarde," which at one point became almost embarrassing. She seemed genuinely drunk from the beginning of the song, but then, when there was laughter in the audience, she broke off to *engueuler* those who were laughing at her. Her outburst produced a silence.

◆

JEAN COCTEAU took me to lunch and of course was gratified by my admiration. I had enormously enjoyed his "Les Mariés de la Tour Eiffel," performed by the Swedish Ballet, which, with its ostrich and hunter in the Eiffel Tower, and its general (a guest at the wedding, who is eaten by a lion: "He would have been the first to laugh about it"), seemed to me a new departure in French humor, an equivalent to English nonsense. He did not like my confusing him with the Dadaists—on account of his having made a contribution to one of Picabia's publications—and scoffed at the idea that their nonsense was perpetrated in a genuine spirit of fun: "*Ils sont tous de petits Nietzsches!*" Like most of the young French writers of the time, he was not enthusiastic about Anatole France, who he said was "*fou de la politique.*" France, he said, liked to gossip about Mme. de Noailles, who had an unusually large head, and to speculate as to how she disposed of it when she was lying with her lover. I wanted to talk to him about Octave Mirbeau, whom I had read during the war and whose "Sébastien Roch" I admired. Cocteau said that at the end of his life Mirbeau had been "*très malade.*" "*C'est toute une génération que la nôtre a sautée.*"

He talked presently with a marked brilliance. I was struck—though I did not agree with him—by his saying that Flaubert was always getting ready to shoot but did not hit the target, whereas Stendhal did not aim but hit the mark. I later found that he had simply been giving me a passage from his "Le Secret Professionel." I do not disapprove of this practice. I have known Santayana to do it and have sometimes done it myself.

◆

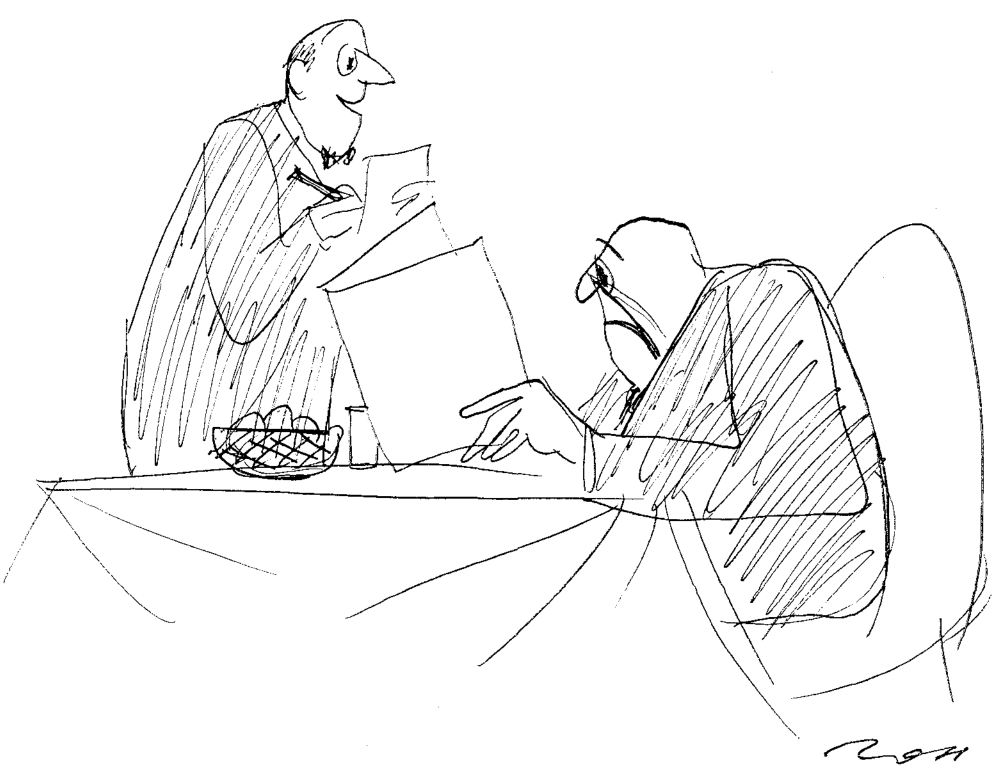
I FOUND Edna [Millay] very much allied with the bohemians of the Left Bank, with whom I was not much at home.

We walked in the Bois de Boulogne and joked about the signs that said "*Pelouse Défendue.*" Edna said that we could always protest, "*Mais nous ne pelousons pas.*" She was very broke at the moment and she asked me to take her to the south of France, but I knew that she was not to be relied on and would leave me for anyone who seemed more attractive. I did not want to have to worry and suffer again. I, besides, felt committed to Mary Blair, who had promised to try to join me in France. I declined to go away with Edna, and lent her money instead.

◆

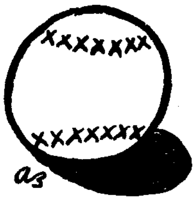
THE Fitzgeralds were in Europe, but I never saw them. Scott wrote me a letter in which he wondered how I could enjoy it. He had never learned French. They had had a misadventure in Paris due to Zelda's having tried to make sure of the hotel elevator by tying it fast to their floor. I replied with a rather high-flown eulogy on French literature and culture.

It was only on a later visit that they got to know Hemingway and the Gerald Murphys, who apparently, with no admixture of other elements, came to constitute Europe for Scott. The Fitzgeralds seem to have lived in France without any real contact with the country, as they had not had, for that matter, any very close relations with New York. Hemingway, whom Scott began by adoring and by whom he remained more or less obsessed, did not represent



"Yes, sir. What's your pleasure?"

any social level, and the Murphys were also anomalous. Gerald, as an Irish Catholic and hence not "out of the top drawer" in New York, was also a somewhat eccentric and an independent figure, who could hardly be assigned to any "life-style" or group. He and Scott had it in common that they were both Irish Catholics, and Scott's discovery of Gerald as a man from the same semi-excluded background, but very rich as he was not and would have liked to be, with glamorous and fastidious tastes, amusing, sensitive, and capable of fantasy, was like the realization of a dream. But I wonder that the Murphys stood Scott for so long. They remonstrated with him for asking his impudent, embarrassing questions, and they would put him into Coventry for specified periods when he had thrown things into their drawing room at times when they were entertaining aristocratic French guests and had not invited the Fitzgeralds. But the lively imaginations and entertainment value of Scott and Zelda preserved them through a certain amount of troublemaking.



I believe that [John] Dos Passos was right when he suggested to me once that Scott was by no means always so drunk as he pretended to be, but merely put on drunken acts, which gave him an excuse for clowning and outrageous behavior, because he had never learned to practice the first principles of civilized behavior. This must have been the case on the occasion of his disastrous call on Edith Wharton, who had admired "The Great Gatsby" and who was evidently disposed to like him but by whose reputation—at the moment he was unaccompanied by Zelda—he had been made excessively self-conscious. He had also an act as Prince Charming, and I have been assured by a lady who had met him only once that in this role he was quite irresistible. I saw him assuming this personality when I took him for a drink with Léonie Adams, the poet, whom he had never seen before and whose half-Latin-American prettiness and obvious purity of spirit called forth all his instincts of chivalry. But this lasted for only about three minutes before the sloppy boor took over. I think he may have been too much aware that I would have been surprised by his access of conscious charm.

PARIS

THE Tuileries and the Louvre were a blank gray embankment; the river lost itself in gray on either side, where the dotted lines of lights of the bridges reverberated one another; to the west, above the river, the smoky twilight was faintly tinted with rose. From the Left Bank one saw the yellow stars, which seemed to make the night a milky green, beneath the trees of the Place de la Concorde, from which the Obelisk lifted its pale blade.

The Rue de Richelieu: the long, crowded windows of the gray façades strung with twisted-iron balconies, where one saw the tarnished gold letters that announced firms and products; the narrowness, the oldness of the street; the very impression one got of the stuffiness and moldiness and darkness and dirt of the interiors somehow having a richness and dignity as of a life that, in spite of its inferior neatness and spick-and-spanness, was essentially more serious and finer than our own—as if the less well-educated people than oneself were yet more sophisticated: they had seen the Revolution. A small gray square with a large iron fountain and some trees, closed in by gray. Along the Chaussée de la Muette, the little leaves were yellowing and powdering the walk, and the light of the withdrawing sun itself was yellow and faded and rusty; there was a faint haze in the park, where the children were playing about the simple little skeletons of the folding iron chairs.

Rue de Varenne: through an archway in a gray stone façade, with stone balconies and white persiennes, one saw a smooth-cobbled little street, closed in with fine-looking hotels—a glass semicircle above a door, trees turning yellow in a garden, the fine-leaved foliage overflowing the black iron grilles—which turned and closed off its perspective. Everywhere, the Corinthian columns inlaid between the long windows, above which are arcs of stone or masklike faces (of Cupids?)—the gray many-windowed façades—the lacelike effect of the streets, with their stiff fringe of lightning rods and chimney pots—the subdued changes of the autumn, without tragic splendor or bravado—the smooth, brightly lighted fields of the Champs-Élysées at night. The leaves behind the Hôtel Biron looked tiny, as if they had been engraved, and were yellowing in a dull, pale fashion, as if the engraving had faded.

•

THE artists working with all their might to make life look interesting and attractive; the philosophers and historians to give it some sort of meaning.

•

HUMAN beings are tiny centers of consciousness in the void, with only their frail bodies to keep out the overpowering nothing of infinity which presses in on them—little creatures growing and building against the annihilation of space and the inorganic world.

•

THE melancholy thing about happiness is not that it doesn't exist but that it doesn't last (in reply to Leopardi's Torquato Tasso dialogue).

DJUNA BARNES

WHEN Mary [Blair] admired a nightgown she had bought in Paris: "Yes: I spent all summer looking for a night to go with that nightgown."

•

I SHOULD think that Edna Millay and Frank Crowninshield would be the two most cynical people in the world; both of them have discovered that everyone, no matter how intelligent or superior, may be made a fool of by flattery, if it is cleverly enough applied. They flatter the intellectual according to his intellect and the artist according to his art.

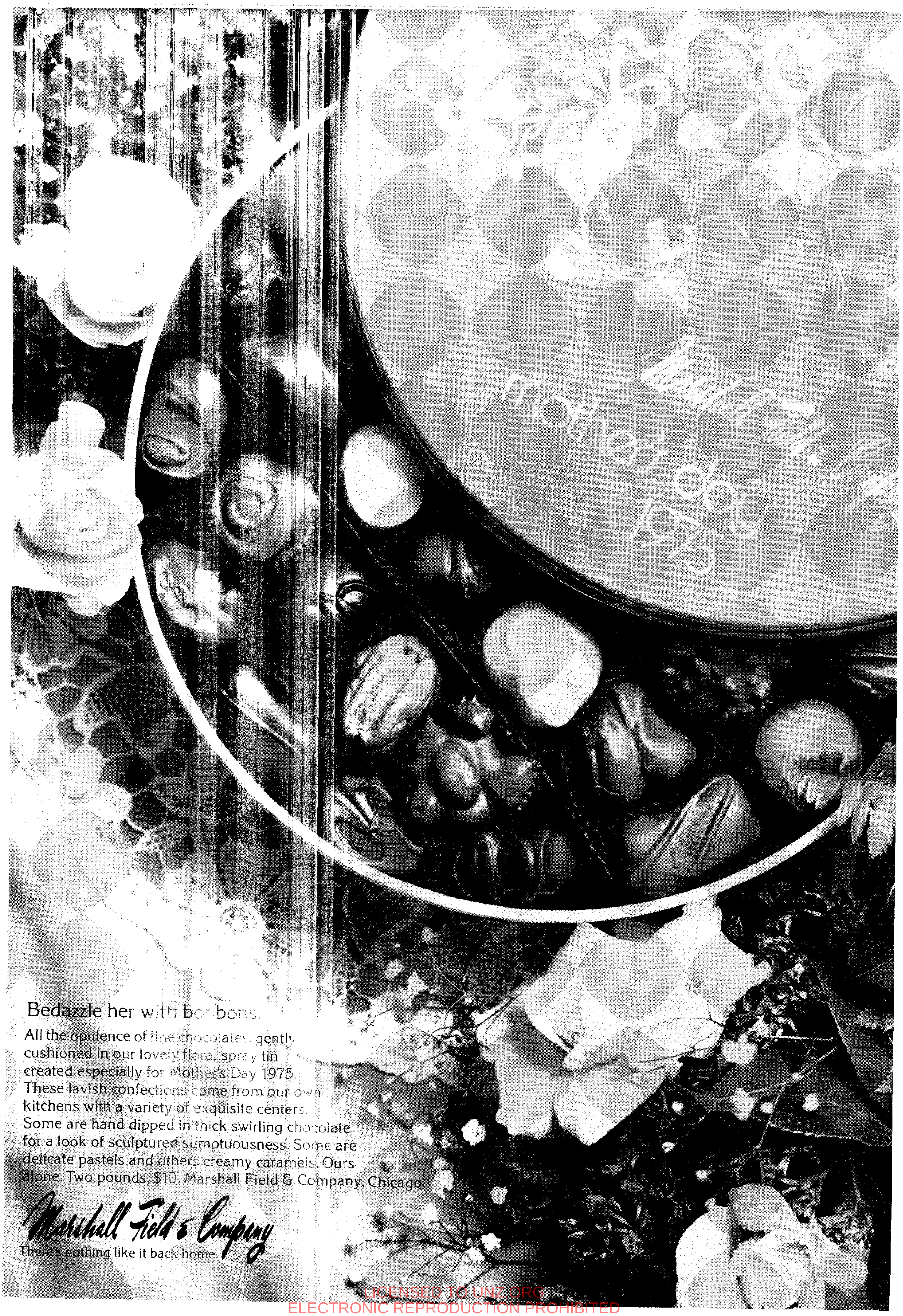
•

EUGENE O'NEILL was still married to and living with his second wife, Agnes—to whom he referred as Aggie. I saw quite a lot of Agnes O'Neill, because she was a friend of Mary Blair's. Her father was English, a painter, and she was an English type, sensible, practical, rather lacking in elegance but likable and with qualities that commanded respect. She had also some literary ability and wrote a book about her marriage. O'Neill, on the other hand, in spite of an appealing boyish charm, was difficult to make contact with. I was grateful to him for persuading the Provincetown Players to produce my first play, "The Crime in the Whistler Room," but I found conversation with him impossible.

GREAT NECK, MID-APRIL

FITZ [Scott Fitzgerald] said he was going abroad because his reputation was diminishing in America, and he wanted to stay away till he had accomplished something important and then come back and have people give him dinners.

[Ring] Lardner read the golf rules



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aloud. (This was a little book put out by the local golf club. Lardner read these rules at length with a cold and sombre scorn that was funny yet really conveyed his disgust with his successful suburban life.) Then we went back to the Fitzgeralds'. Lardner and I started talking about the oil scandal, and Fitz fell asleep in his chair. Lardner and I went on talking about baseball, Heywood Broun, Lardner's writing, the Americanized "Carmen," the [Burton] Rascoes, etc. Deep-blue patches appeared at the windows. I couldn't think at first what they were—then I realized it was the dawn. The birds tuned up one at a time. It grew light. It was seven o'clock. Scott asked what we had been talking about. Lardner said we had been talking about him. "I suppose you analyzed me ruthlessly." Zelda was sick and had to have the doctor and apologized profoundly for her "rudeness."

When we were talking about his own work, Lardner said that the trouble was he couldn't write straight English. I asked him what he meant, and he said: "I can't write a sentence like 'We were sitting in the Fitzgeralds' house, and the fire was burning brightly.' "

Coney Island, Early Summer

UNDER the great wide white and buff of Childs, like the Pennsylvania Station, with its high windows and bright mosaics, one caught in the mirrors the reflection of girls in wide hats and bright summer colors walking the boardwalk outside in the summer sun that bleached whites whiter and blue and yellow white.

Asbury Park, Fourth of July

THE girls were wearing long dresses and light coats lined with fur at the bottom, and the men white knickerbocker trousers and sweaters checked tan and white. Hot dogs, dabbed with mustard from the common bowl with a little long-handled wooden trowel, and buttermilk; salt-water taffy, hot buttered popcorn. As day faded, the sands became palest buff and the ocean grayest blue, with the waves like white porcelain where they broke between—the moon was buff in the gray sky. As the sky darkened, the fireworks were started, and a rocket streamed violet and silver against the deepening gray; then it burst in brooches of red, gold, and green, great bouquets that unfolded and shrivelled, growing out of one another; the loud detonation of a cluster of white electric stars. Children held the bristling brass of their toy sparklers out to the enormous darkening sea. Before night, little blond bob-haired girls and boys, in pink-and-yellow pinafores, slid squealing down the smooth, bumpy slides in an interminable succession. The last random pops and shots of the Fourth. The smell of gunpowder.

Thesaurus for New Jersey Article

STAGNANT, rancid, etiolated; smoking and huddled factories; hot tennis in the morning, tinkling dinners in the evening; dirty wooden suburbs of Newark: dusty ailanthus leaves, shabby park, tacky, down-at-heels, threadbare, napless, boggy, soggy.

Sea Bright

THE large, dark dining room at Panacci's—so much more prepossessing within than it looks from the outside, with its fresh, clean tablecloths and its wide, clean napkins folded in points and stuck in the large, clear tumblers. We sat on a bench under a little shelter near the Beach Club: it was warm; the sky was as soft and dim as the soft, dim sand, and the stars themselves were dim; the waves broke softly, the sea was obscure.

New Canaan

GREAT waves of dullness rolled back and forth through the room—one thought: "I must escape or I shall drown!"

•

DICK MANEY, the press agent, said to Eakin: "Well, don't try to high-hat us, you animal cracker from Pittsburgh!"

•

THE empty sonority of the radio—a hollow yowling.

•

ZELDA used to say that hotel bedrooms excited her erotically.

•

AT Sandlass's, the sound of a solo with piano accompaniment from the radio inside the wooden enclosure where the keys are given out and where candy and beach toys are sold—the sweet melody and the bright piano notes between, slightly scratchy and effaced in spots, as if it had been affected by the sand and bleached by the dry sea air. It pervaded the bathing place naturally, as if in harmony with the sea-seasoned color of the bath-

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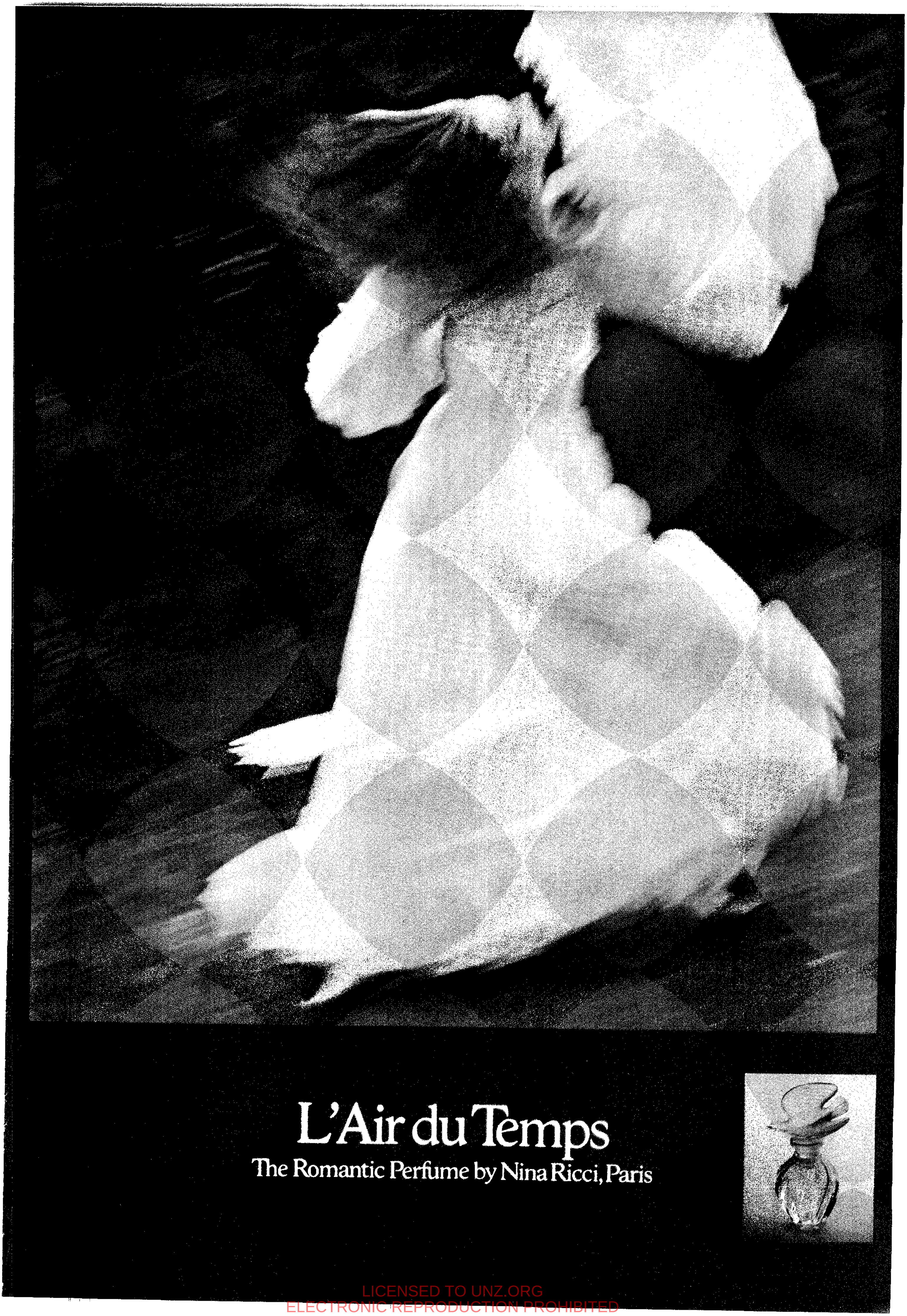
L'Air du Temps
The Romantic Perfume by Nina Ricci, Paris

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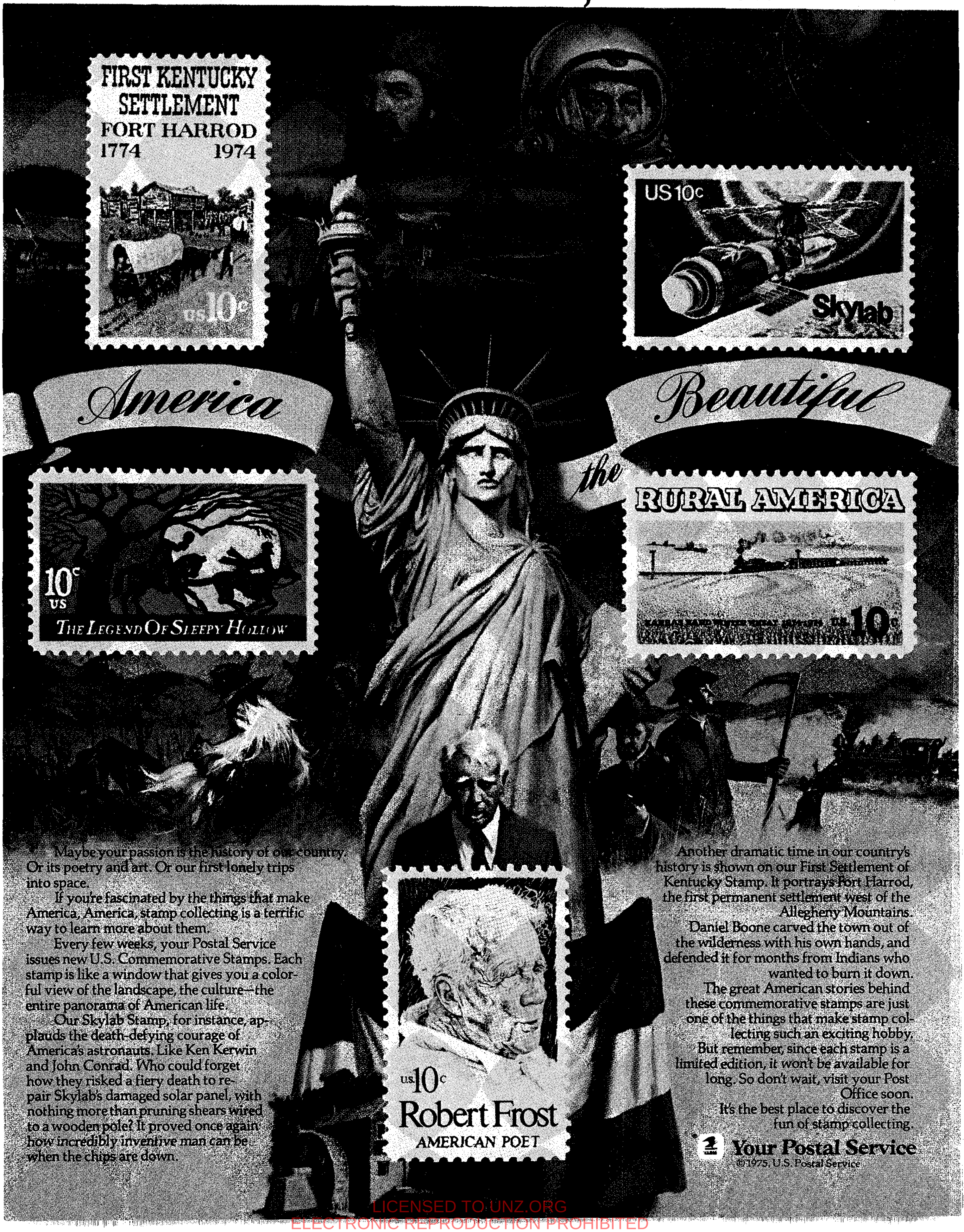
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ing clothes and the brilliance of summer dresses put on without subtleties after the swim.

•

MARION DELL's account of the set of young married people in Paris whose characteristic was that they talked with extravagant freedom but with the attitude that they could be allowed to do so because they were all really all right.

•

FANTASIA on letter-writing [we had a game of impersonating imaginary characters]: "Oh, yes: I always have a stenographer on the train with me—and I always have a stenographer at the theatre. I have her in a seat right next to mine, so that anytime when I cease to be interested in the play, I can turn around and say, 'Miss Dokes, take this.' I just drop the thread of the play and then later on I take it up again. I write to people all over the world. I just sent my first letter to Peru the other day—Peru and Bolivia! I just write letters—I must write half a million letters in a year! Sometimes I don't say very much in them—I just say, 'Yours of the so-and-so received, Yours very truly'—but it brings you into touch with people, into close touch with them! I'm able to get into touch in that way with perhaps two-thirds of all the people in the world, and those who can't read and write I reach by dictaphone records. I have a secretary for every language—very high-priced men. I have high-priced men for everything—I get the best people in every line. Those who can't read and write and suffer from infectious diseases—like lepers. Oh, I have people with all kinds of infectious diseases!"

•

[THE following song was composed by Scott Fitzgerald, with some assistance from me. The third—and not so successful—stanza was contributed by me much later. A good deal of the effect of the song depended on the appropriate gestures that accompanied every line and on the impersonation of the dog lover who was supposed to be singing it. Scott always buttoned up his jacket and assumed an expression of imbecile earnestness. The curious thing was that the song somehow got around. Harl Cook and Paul Chavchavadze heard it in some night club, and I was astonished when I heard them sing it without knowing that Scott and I had composed it. It had been somewhat deformed in

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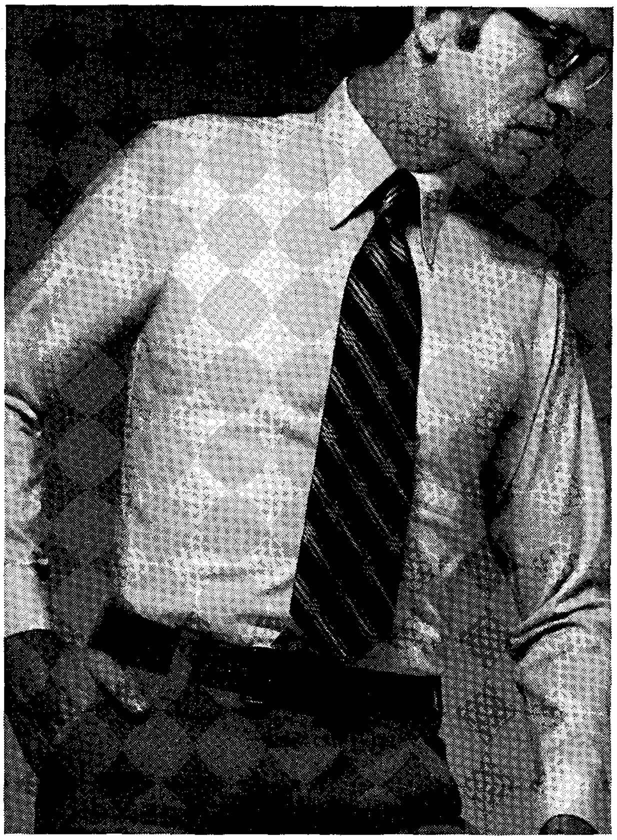
Paul Stuart



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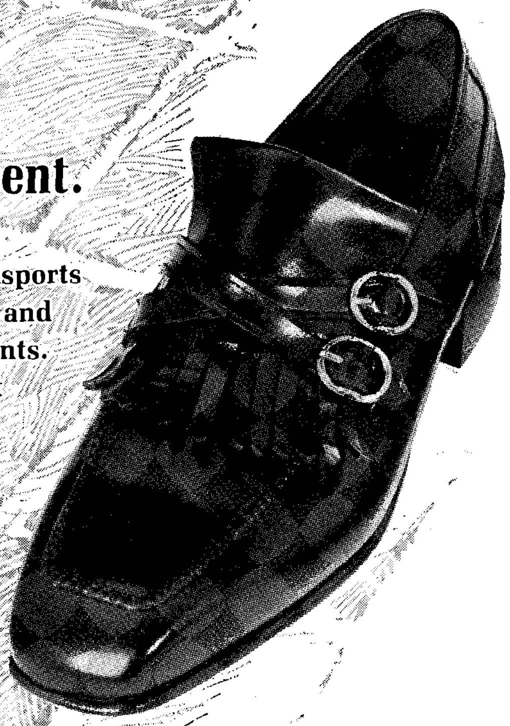

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transmission. Scott and I discussed every line from the point of view of being sure to have it banal and inept enough. I violated this ideal by making the third stanza too clever. Dogs, for some reason I do not understand, always seemed to Scott somewhat comic.]

In sunny Africa they have the elephant
And in India they have the zebra—
Up in Canada the Rocky Mountain goat
And in Idaho the shoat
  (You've heard about it!)
But of all these animals
You will find the best of pals—
  Is:

Dog, dog—I like a good dog!
Towser or Bowser or Star—
Clean sort of pleasure—
A four-footed treasure—
And faithful as few humans are!
Here, Pup: put your paw up—
Roll over dead like a log!
Larger than a rat!
More faithful than a cat!
  Dog! Dog! Dog!

The monkey makes us gay—
Tigers are byoo-ti-ful!
The patient horse, they say,
Drags heavy loads all day—
Up in the air we see our many feathered
  friends—
And for eggs we have the hens
  (They always lay them!)
But you may list or hark:
You'll never hear one bark!
  Like:

Dog, dog—I like a good dog!
Rover or Fido or Spot—
Clean sort of pleasure—
A four-footed treasure—
And loyal as humans are not!
Here, Pup: put your paw up—
Roll over dead like a log!
Bolder than a mouse!
More wholesome than a louse!
  Dog! Dog! Dog!

•

ON the back streets of suburban towns, little girls in green hats are dancing the Charleston.

WELL-KNOWN ACTOR'S APARTMENT

HE had tried to make it Chinese, painted the woodwork black and orange; enormous bronze Chinese vase, with electric light inside, which supplied subdued illumination; Early American clock; two enormous divans, covered with a rainbow of cushions; small, closely curtained windows; little boudoir off the sitting room; triple locks on the doors; Oriental copper ornament which stood on the floor and suggested a convenience for ladies; sets of Oscar Wilde and Stevenson; room completely dominated by three great portraits of actor, with the wires concealed by branches of artificial grapes; aquarium for goldfish with naked nymphs in attitudes of abandon in the gravel at the bottom

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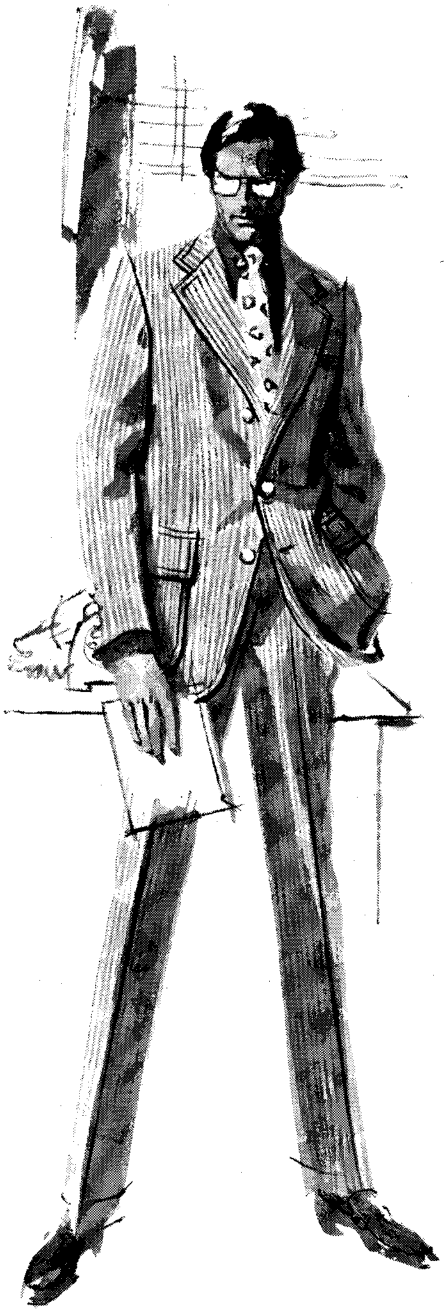

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and a bronze satyr rising from the middle; Oriental screen; white fur rug; two sumptuous cocktail sets; large Victrola.

The bedroom, with its imperial canopied bed and a copy of *Who's Who in the Theatre* on the table—rather like a woman's bedroom. The pictures of his family in the bathroom. The private telephone number: the first night I was there, three girls called up. The apartment house: the cautious and confidential doorman. Sounds of hysteria, violence, merrymaking, and love emanating from the various floors as we went up in the elevator. Ice machine in the refrigerator.

NEW ORLEANS

FROM the hotel window, the dull-chocolate and slate-lilac city with its high roofs and narrow windows, in the dim, damp light of March, and, beyond it, the muddy river. Maidenhair ferns in front yards and wisteria vines on iron balconies—delicately fronded and foliated like the wrought-iron designs of the balconies. That perfume of Southern trees and plants in the air. In the streets of the old French Quarter, that toasted, smoky smell. Two Negroes walking down the street, singing the Charleston music together, with considerable elegance. Some unidentifiable, invisible person whistling "Collegiate," as we were getting out of the train—more softly, more melodiously, more roundly than one ever hears it in the North. The last vibration of a riverboat still beating in the air. Loud cries from the street of newsboys and street venders. Not many harsh motor horns. The slight chime of the cathedral, like a silver mosquito's whine.

Food: Deep-brown crayfish soup, with the bright-red head and trunk of a crayfish floating in it, so rankly aromatic that it tastes like the smell of an old stable. Chicken cooked, with mushrooms and gravy, in a sealed folder of brown paper, which is only sliced open by the waiter when the dish is set before you. Pompano in paper. Beer on draught in an old-fashioned bar, with excellent hot pot-roast sandwiches. Big barrel-shaped, red-faced men, old bartenders and restaurant cashiers—the same type as the patrons whom they serve. The sweet licorice taste, the iridescent exhilaration of absinthe frappé—crystal and pearl in green glasses.

•

THE girls doctored their hair with Golden Glint and other things of the kind, which gave it an unnatural and usually rather ugly shade of bad brass—entirely different from that which appeared on the girls in the advertisements. "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes." Girlfriend, boyfriend. Hanging of Gerald Chapman. Arrest of Mencken in Boston. "Skyscrapers." John Quinn catalogue for two dollars. Raquel Meller. Circus in new Madison Square Garden. Congressional debate on Prohibition. Labor troubles in Passaic. First number of *New Masses.* Christian Gauss, Dean of Princeton, makes speech about not caring what students did, so long as they did it like gentlemen. Living very cheap in France. Nadir of franc. Little thirty-dollar portable phonographs. Coon-Sanders Original Nighthawks, Ned Horne and his Highhatters, Lee Morse and the Blue Grass Boys. Cheap brown records, records made of mud. Kazoo squealings, sonorous beats of the bass, hollow saxophone, speeded jingling-jangling trot. Scratched, scarred records piled on each other and scraped together—needles ruthlessly dropped on them when they are starting and turned off without the needles being lifted. "Nize Baby." North Pole. All books commended on jackets by H. L. Mencken. Mark Sullivan's "Our Times." Vogue of Carl Van Vechten. "Intimate Papers of Colonel House." "The Shanghai Gesture." Sinclair Lewis refuses Pulitzer Prize. English General Strike. Shooting of Chicago Assistant State's Attorney in car with four gangsters—machine gun; *surréalisme.* Wrecking of Vanderbilt mansion.

JEAN

LOOKING down at me from the stair railing: "Got a new pair of dogs? Do they bite?" ("Dogs" was slang for shoes.) She had just bought a little Japanese coat, a little too small for her and typical of the kind of clothes she likes to wear: The plaid shirt with suspenders. Little white, starched clowns' ruffs around her neck. Large shoes: thick legs and arms. Shiny black hair, which she would plaster down and be very much afraid of having disturbed—*accroche-cœurs* on either side. She never wanted to take off her hat and seemed to identify her virtue with it. Jean always looked so ripe, smooth, and clean.

•

WHEN Rosalind [daughter] came back from Red Bank and I was taking her home in a taxi, she kept saying, "New York! New York!"—the first time I ever heard her say it. Throws her little arms out straight when she is asleep. Looks most like

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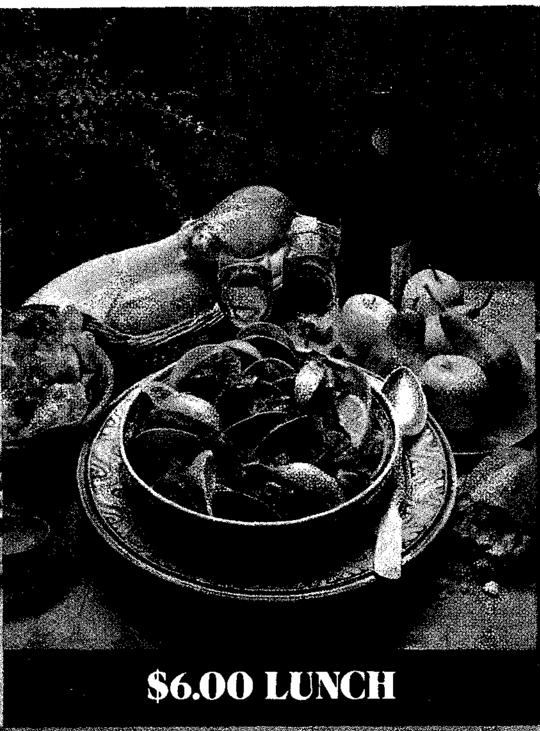

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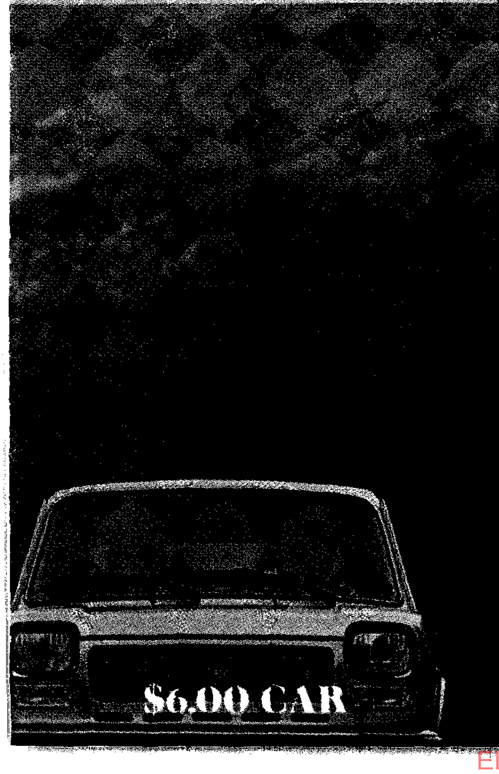

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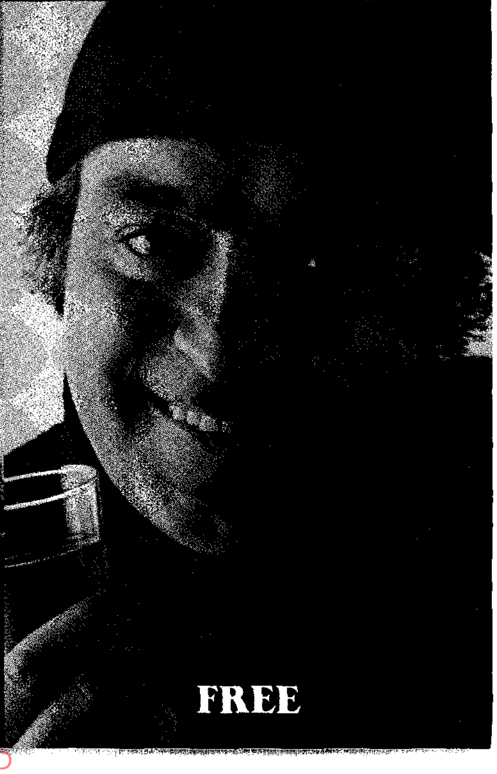

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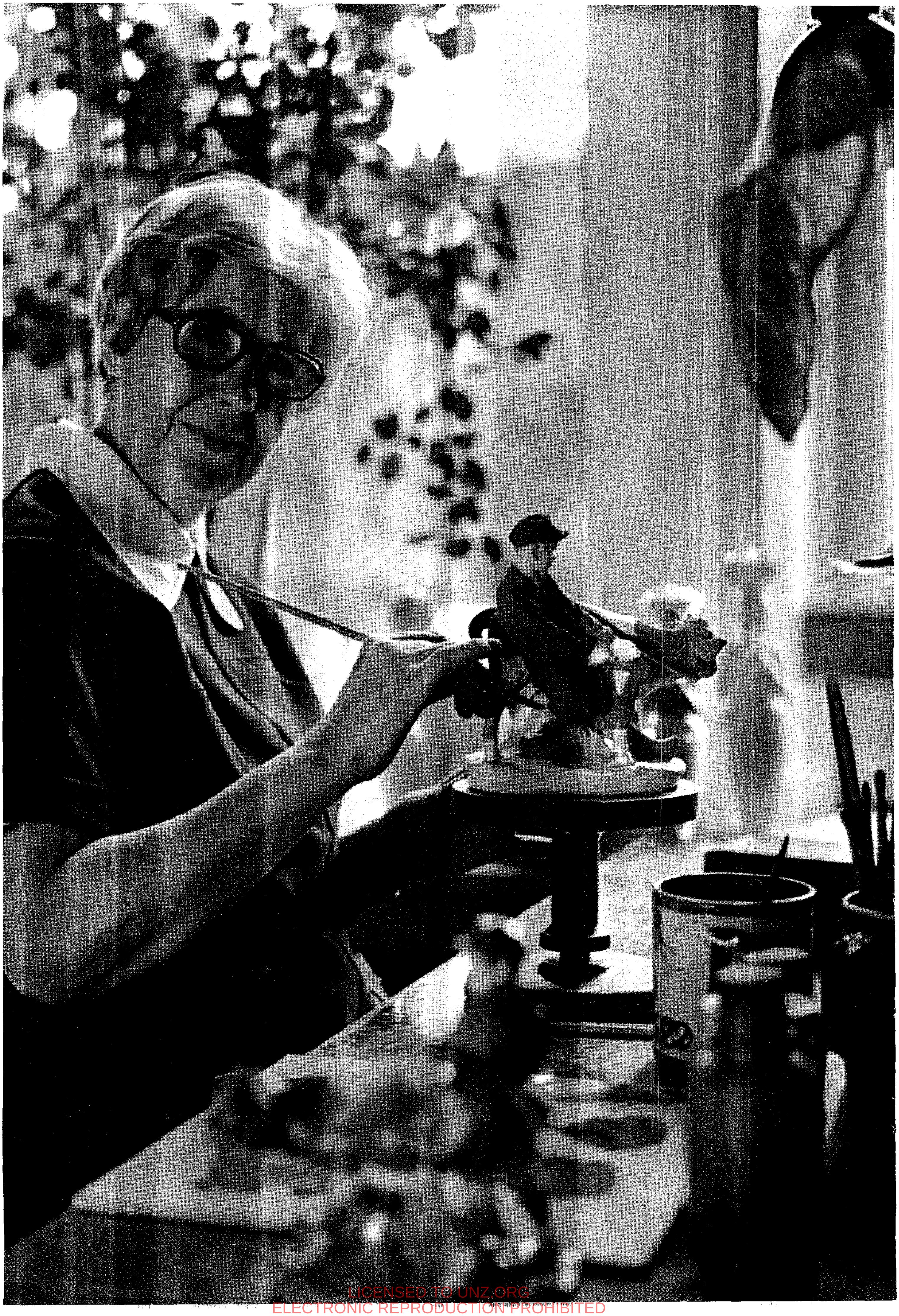
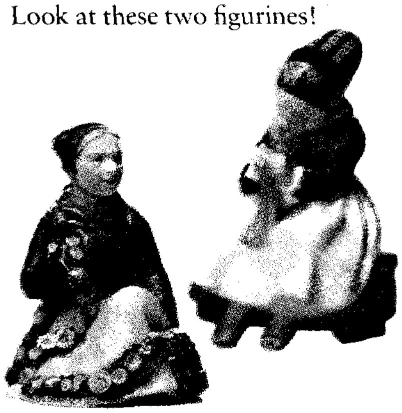


"I started painting these figurines 25 years ago, and I'm still not tired of them."

Gerda Schiøtz, 67
Porcelain painter at Royal Copenhagen.

"There are so many different figurines, some of them children, some birds or animals, and they are all part of my daily life.
It all started long before my time, in 1885 to be exact, with Professor Arnold Krog who loved nature and was especially fond of our Danish landscape's soft colors.

Look at these two figurines!

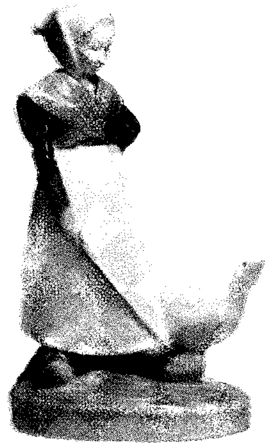


The one to the left is painted over the glaze. This is typical of the traditional style up to the 1880's. Compare it with the figurine to the right which is like the ones Arnold Krog painted in 1885 and you will see what I mean when I talk about "Danish Colors".

It's especially the blue he used that I'd like to tell you about.

If you look at the figurine I'm painting at the moment you will notice that the blue colors are very strong.

Professor Krog discovered that when the decoration was painted before the object was glazed and fired, the colors became delicate and translucent.



The development of underglaze painting using naturalistic motifs like landscapes and flowers was quite a breakthrough for Royal Copenhagen. Soon there was an international demand for our figurines and vases. Professor Krog made careful observations of zoological specimens such as fish, snails and frogs—anything that could be reproduced in porcelain with underglaze decoration.

'The public is demanding and wants forever something new', he wrote in his diary. 'One wants a monkey, one a seagull'.

The public wasn't disappointed. Animals, birds and children like this little boy I am painting who is pulling a calf, were soon part of our fast-growing family.

Here's what it looks like when it's finished.

Every figurine is hand-made and hand-painted (which is where I come into the picture) and then glazed. And when I tell you that Royal Copenhagen has 600 figurines in its family, you'll understand why I never get tired of them".

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Mary [first wife] when she is sleeping. Beautiful, sweet smile when she tries to lead me to the candy box—like little angel in sentimental picture guiding mankind to hope and love.

•

THAT vague and charming feeling of coming to (no doubt a dose of aspirin contributed to these sensations), after having been drunk the night before, very late in the day—of going out and finding the warm May day, the people out on the avenue in their Sunday clothes and riding on top of the buses; of lying inside and hearing, from behind the lowered shades, where a bright sun comes in through a hole, the cries of children playing in the street and the sound of boat whistles. We leave the windows up during the day and the shades up at night: we don't need to shut ourselves up any longer. At night, a warm obscurity plaited with the bright pearls of lamps, the taxis moving on their errands—they seem more genial, more attractive now. The first soft mysteries of the city summer.

KATZE AT THE MILLAYS' PARTY

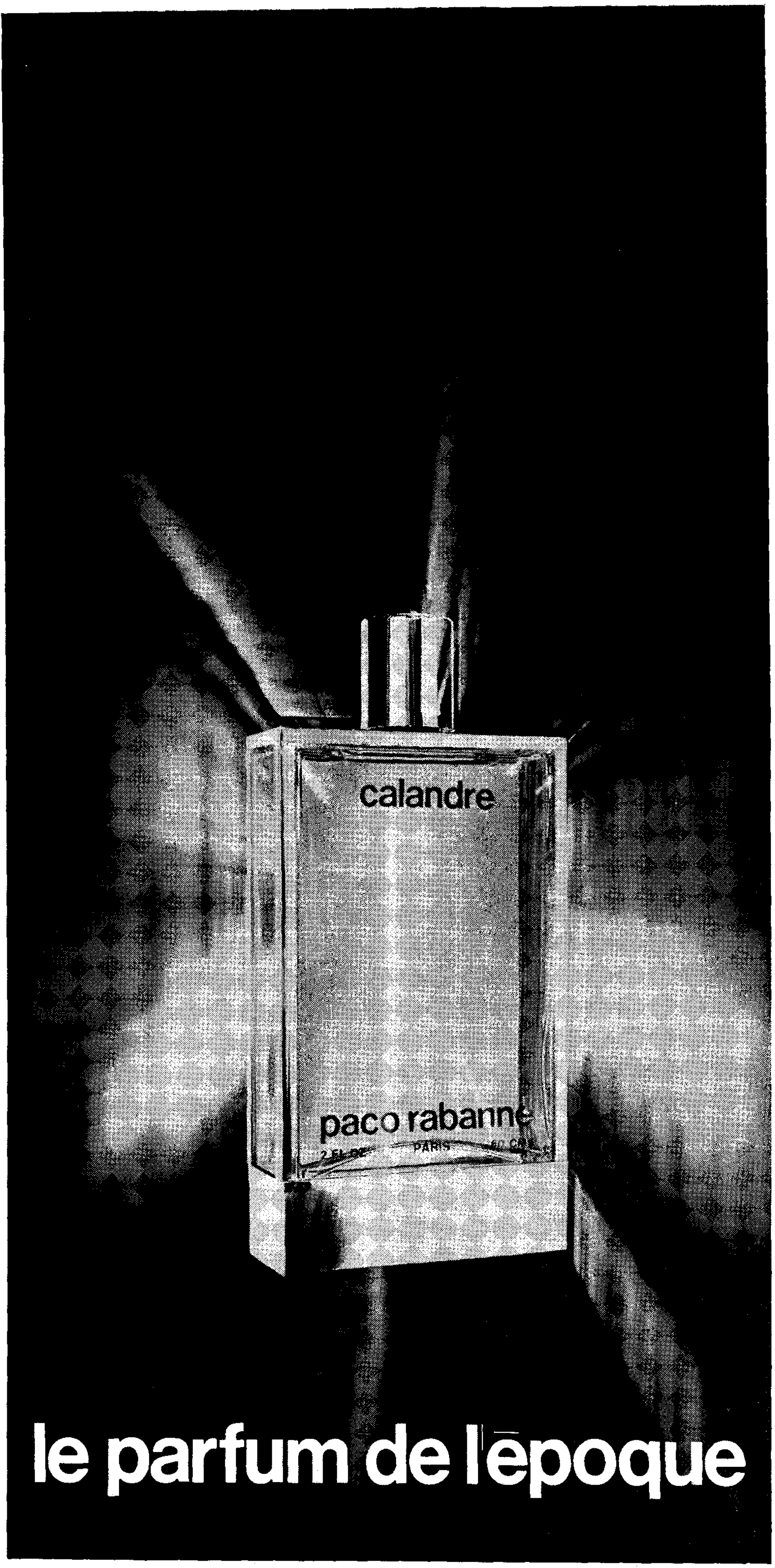
SHE went into the front room, where they were almost alone, with rather a good-looking boy with abundant blond hair, and there sprawled in a large armchair with her long, white-stockinged legs and her thin arms thrown about like the legs of a young colt. She was dressed in black and wore a large white gardenia on her shoulder, and her evening dress slipping down on one side showed the gardenia-white skin of her neck. She was a little bit drunk and kept trying to talk French, and she had just been to see "The Importance of Being Earnest," so that, when I asked her to come to the theatre, she kept saying, "That would be quite, quite charming!"

•

KATZE: "I haven't the foggiest! I haven't the slightest! We're not on speaking."

•

THEY had torn down the whole corner of old houses at Fifth Avenue and Washington Mews, and one saw, looking over the mews, the square compact little back windows of the top floors of the Washington Square houses and the chimney pots under the blue June sky, as if one suddenly had a glimpse into the low and open provincial New York of the last century,



Neiman-Marcus

a city with the summer sun and air and the free spaces of a small town, where the multiplied rectangular windows and bulk in cubic feet of the red, middle-class mansions of Washington Square were the tallest and the most impressive structures to be seen.

•

ABYSS of depression caused by calling up girl, finding the line busy for a considerable length of time, and, finally, when it is free, finding she doesn't answer.

KATZE

WE sat on couch from immediately after a late breakfast until just before dinnertime and drank almost a quart of sherry and half a bottle of Scotch. We sang, hummed, and whistled Raquel Meller's "La Violetera" and "Flor di Mal" with great enjoyment. She had her ash-brown, dust-gray hair brushed in a new way, parted in the middle, so that it made rounded bangs over her eyes and brought out their roundness, their largeness, and their softness. She told me that she was built like her mother, who had small bones, but that her eyes were like her father's—he was an arrogant, imperious, and intolerant German type, and her mother had lately divorced him. It made me think how beautiful eyes were produced—not by happy matches, necessarily. Katze had been to the Metropolitan and seen a Nativity of Greco and gone off afterward to a tea in a great state of exaltation. Favorite expression: "Not so hot." She talked about her parents in the impudent, dramatic way that clever young people do, especially when they have them on their minds. She said that her father was intellectual and her mother sentimental: she read Schiller, who was an awfully sentimental writer: "Mother is quite beautiful, you know." Her young-girlish way of lowering her eyes with an air of anguish when I asked her what had happened to her affair with the man she said she had loved—he had been "so sensitive"—a long time ago. She wasn't in love with anybody now. I asked her how long ago it had been, and she said a year and a half. She shook her head, and then said, "Isn't that cute?"

•

VISION in the street of a thousand girls resurrecting themselves in the afternoon from dark and messy rooms, unornamented, poorly furnished, and putting on their white stockings, their

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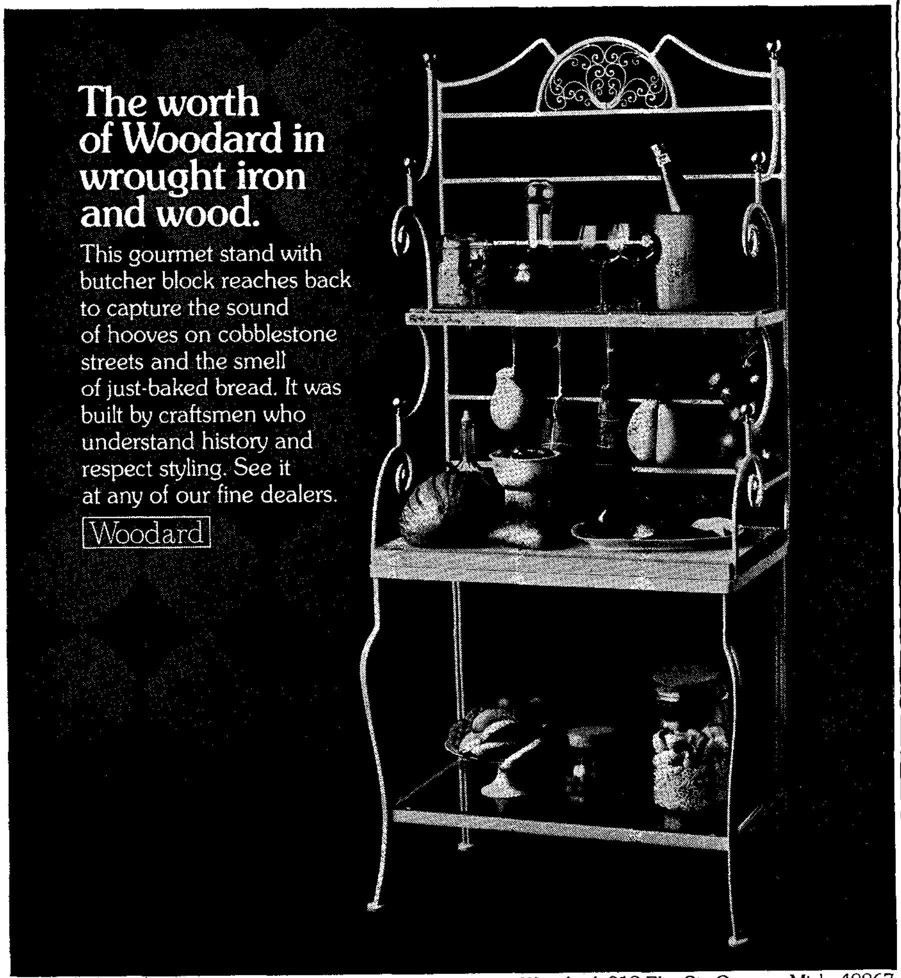
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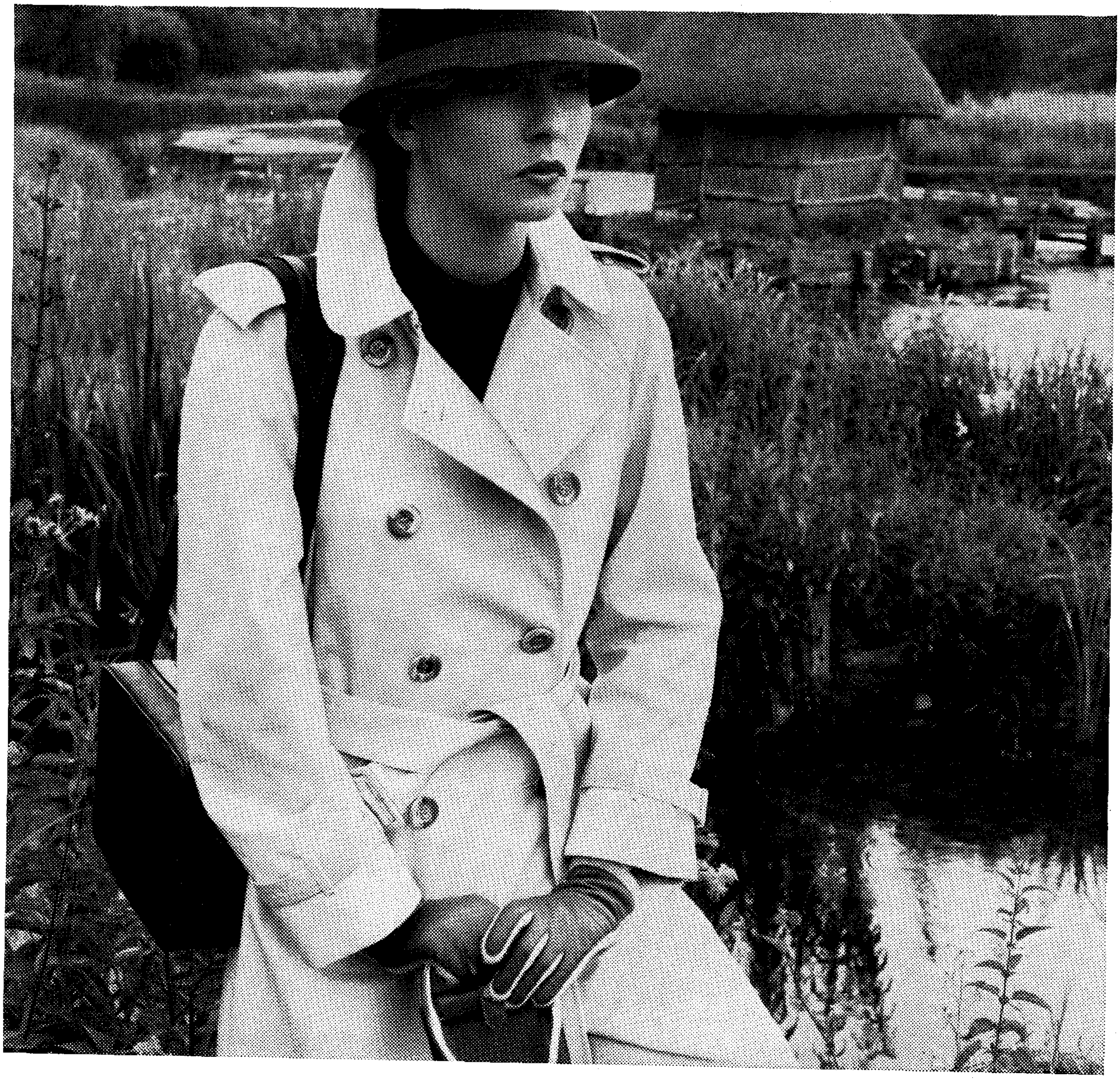

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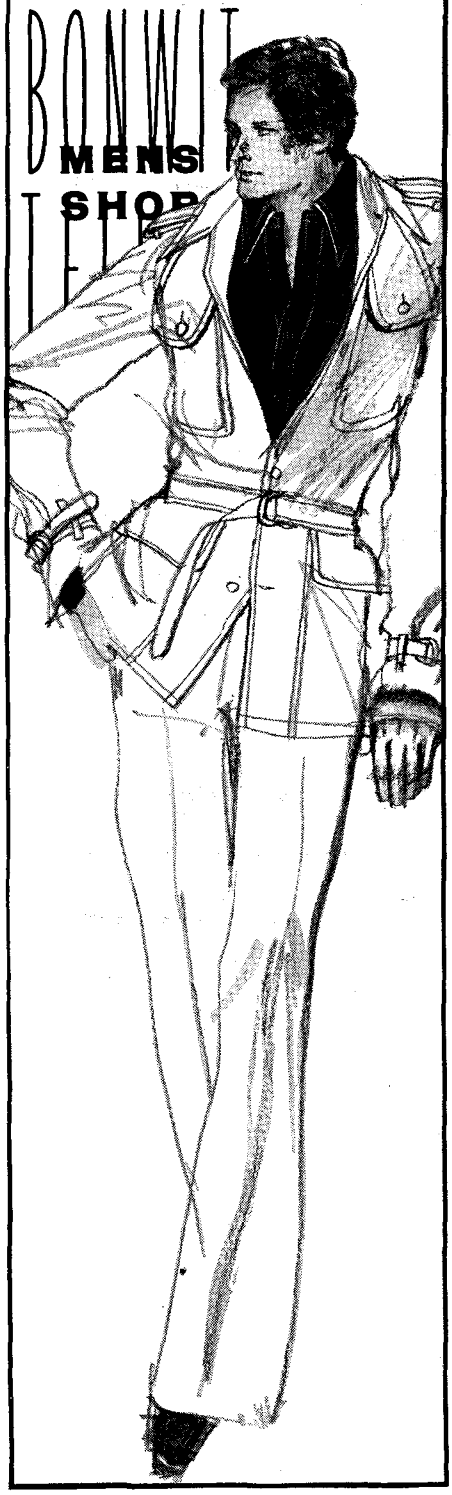

black bonnet hats, their chemises, their flowered chiffon dresses, and emerging, like butterflies from cocoons, enchanting and romantic creatures to exert their magic in the streets, to wander and draw men's glances.

•

A CHILD'S voice from the summer street, nasal and shrill but working the charm of some popular song with a subtle and fascinating deviating melody which it follows accurately through and repeats.

•

Reflections on the natural stultified life of non-thinking and non-feeling, of the laziness of bodily processes fulfilling their functions and the mind drifting among random memories and images, giving wide berth to one's problems and tasks. From this condition, how rarely and with what effort we raise ourselves to compose a picture of experience which invests it with some sort of intensity and insists for it upon some pattern! All of literature gives a false view of life, because it is the obverse of the reality—the artist *fills* in the holes in his character or experience by the fabrication of imaginary spiritual material. First of all, the artist, in his productions, distorts life in a certain direction, manufactures for it a false face; then the reader, who is likely to be deceived into believing—erroneously—that life is really like that for the author and is therefore capable of being made so for others, tries in action to realize the picture which the artist had invented for the purpose precisely of supplying something which he has failed to find. In the end, the impossibilities of the system conspicuously appear, and the model is discarded, with the result that the reader abuses the writer for having misrepresented things.

The point is that the readers of books *lean*, as if upon something unquestionably real and strong, upon what, for the author, was merely a comforting and quite conscious falsification of life, as his own experience has disconcertingly presented it to him, a sort of euphemism made in the hope, which no one knows better than he to be ill-founded, that, by putting such-and-such a face on things, he can actually give them that character; in subjecting the whole of his experience to the coloring and pattern of his own temperament, he forgets for a moment the real, unknowable world. To the reader, it seems as if this inverted world were perhaps the real world which he has himself been looking for, and, for the time being, he may accept it.

Movie News Film

Motorcycles driving up impossible grades, leaping, skidding furiously, throwing their riders, swaying in a headlong rush; motorboat race, with the boats like water bugs nose to nose, to the music of a ridiculous little dance; wonderful slow-motion diving pictures of girls, turning beautifully in the air in molded recumbent postures and sending up a slowly condensing cloud of spray after they have slipped into the water; Gertrude Ederle at Atlantic Highlands sitting on the steps of her father's house playing a ukulele—her father, a German butcher, collarless and in his shirt-sleeves, and her mother to match. It is the silence of the picture and the music of the movie piano which give the sight its dramatic value, despite its utter commonplaceness, Gertrude not even being pretty—afterward much more impressive in her vigorous, lithe overhead stroke and lifting her head like a seal to have her food fed to her from a rowboat.

[Robert] Benchley

DRUMMING with fingers on table at Tony's. He stopped when people at opposite table indicated disapproval. " 'All right, then. I'll stop!' " he said that he said to himself. " '*But the day will come* when you'll come to me on your knees and *ask* me to drum!' "

Dorothy [Parker] went to old-English-folk-song concert with Thornton Wilder: "I was up to my chin in derry-down-derries. They [the singers] came and sat down at a table, and I kept expecting them to deal!" "Did you tell that to Wilder?" "Yes, but he didn't pay much attention to it. He said that there was a great new interest being taken in madrigals. I hadn't known about that."

Literature

THE author's work, no matter how intelligent, elaborate (Proust), or rich and vigorous in imagination, always turns out to constitute a justification for some particular set of values, a making out a case against something or other in favor of something else, a melodrama in which, even if the hero is actually defeated, he is morally triumphant—and the hero may be not a person or persons but merely certain qualities or tendencies. The effort of the author has thus been concentrated on making life look as if it justified his own ideals—that is, his own desires—and it is the indestructible impulse to make his experience, disap-

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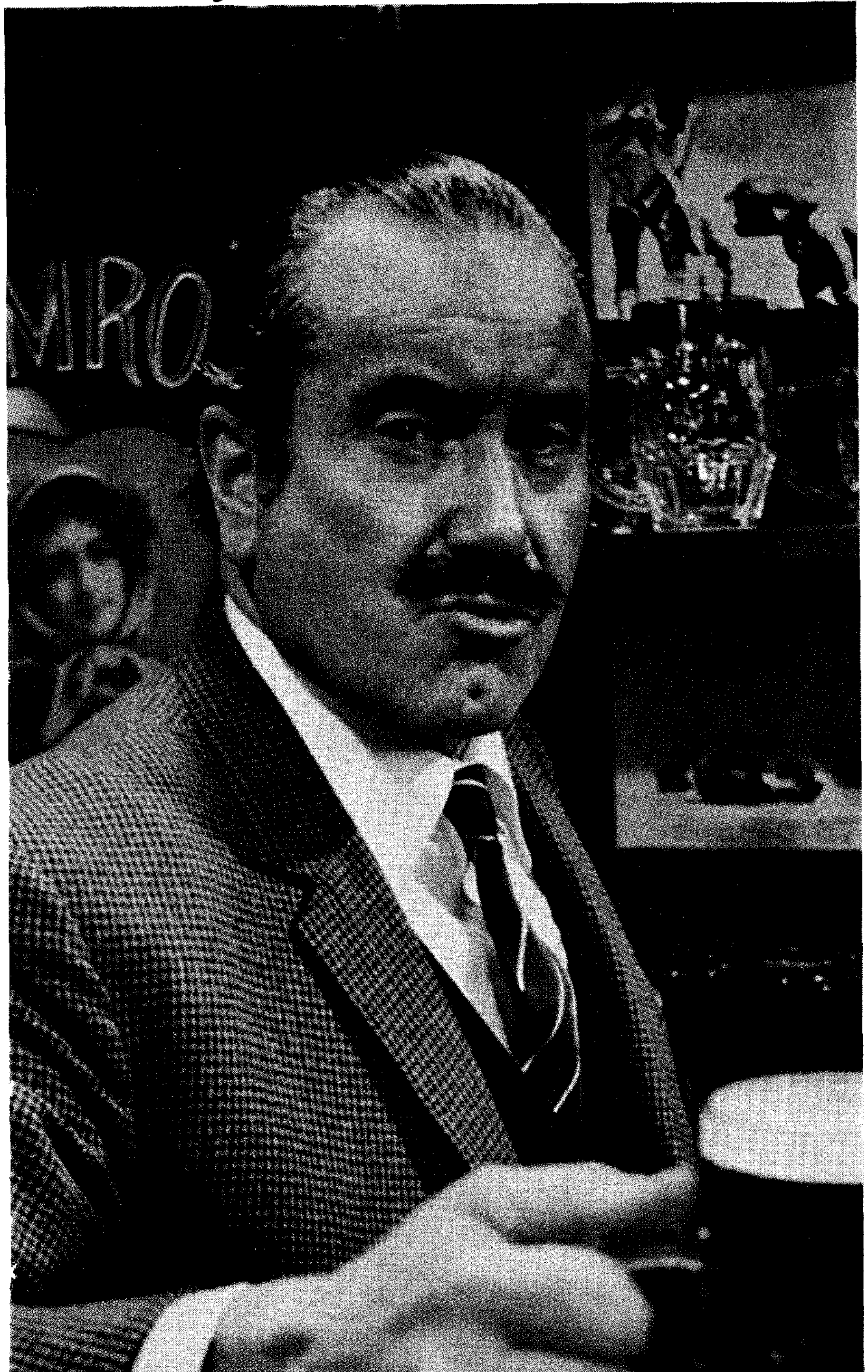

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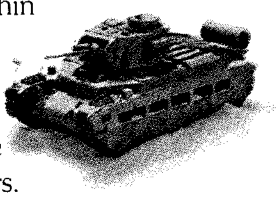

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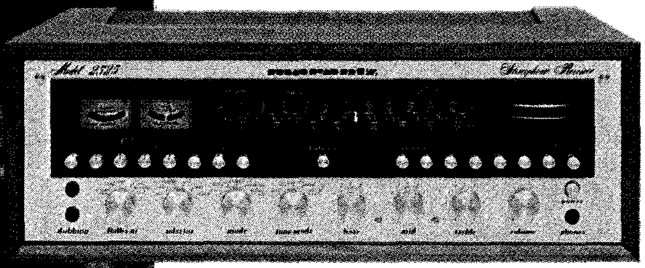

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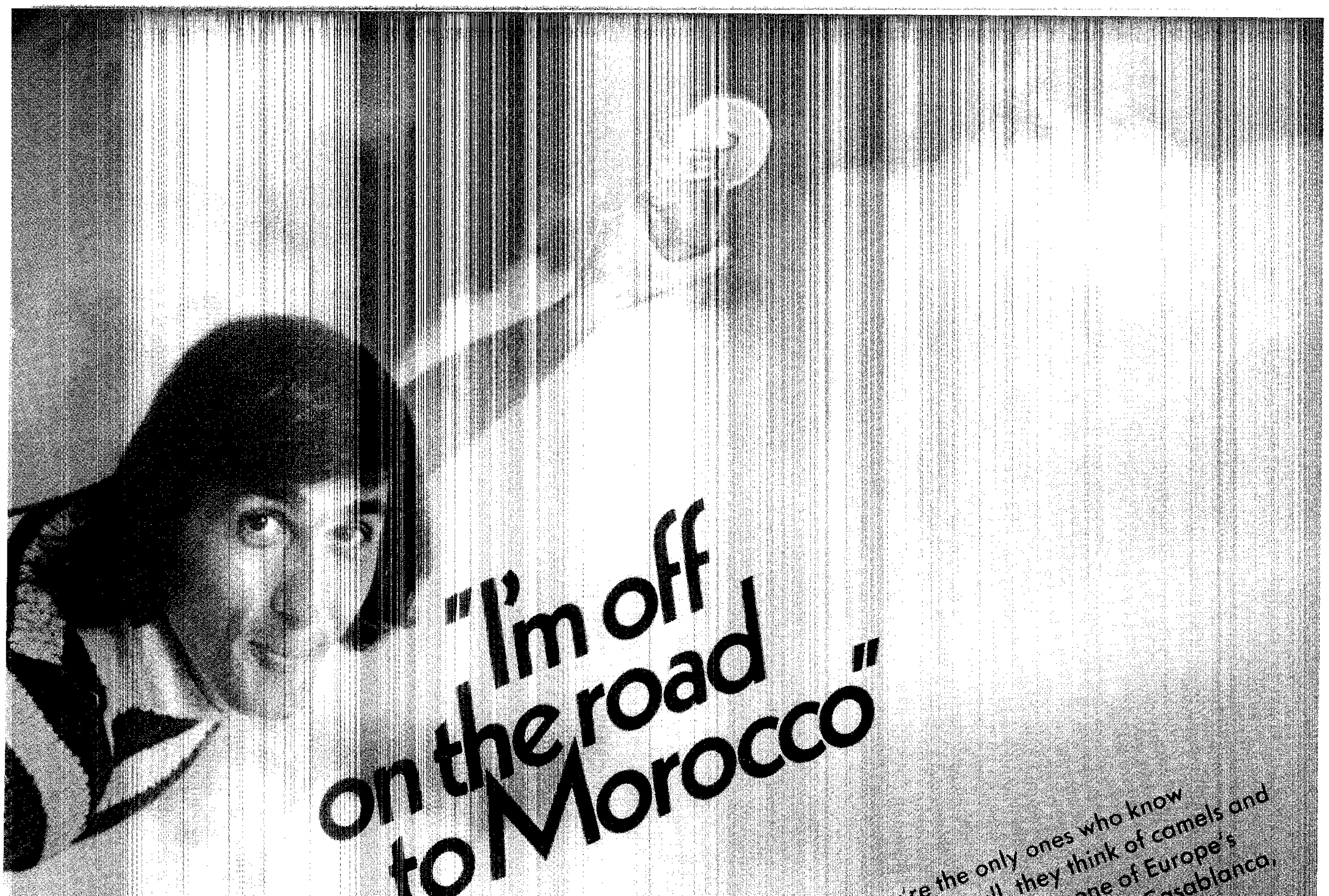
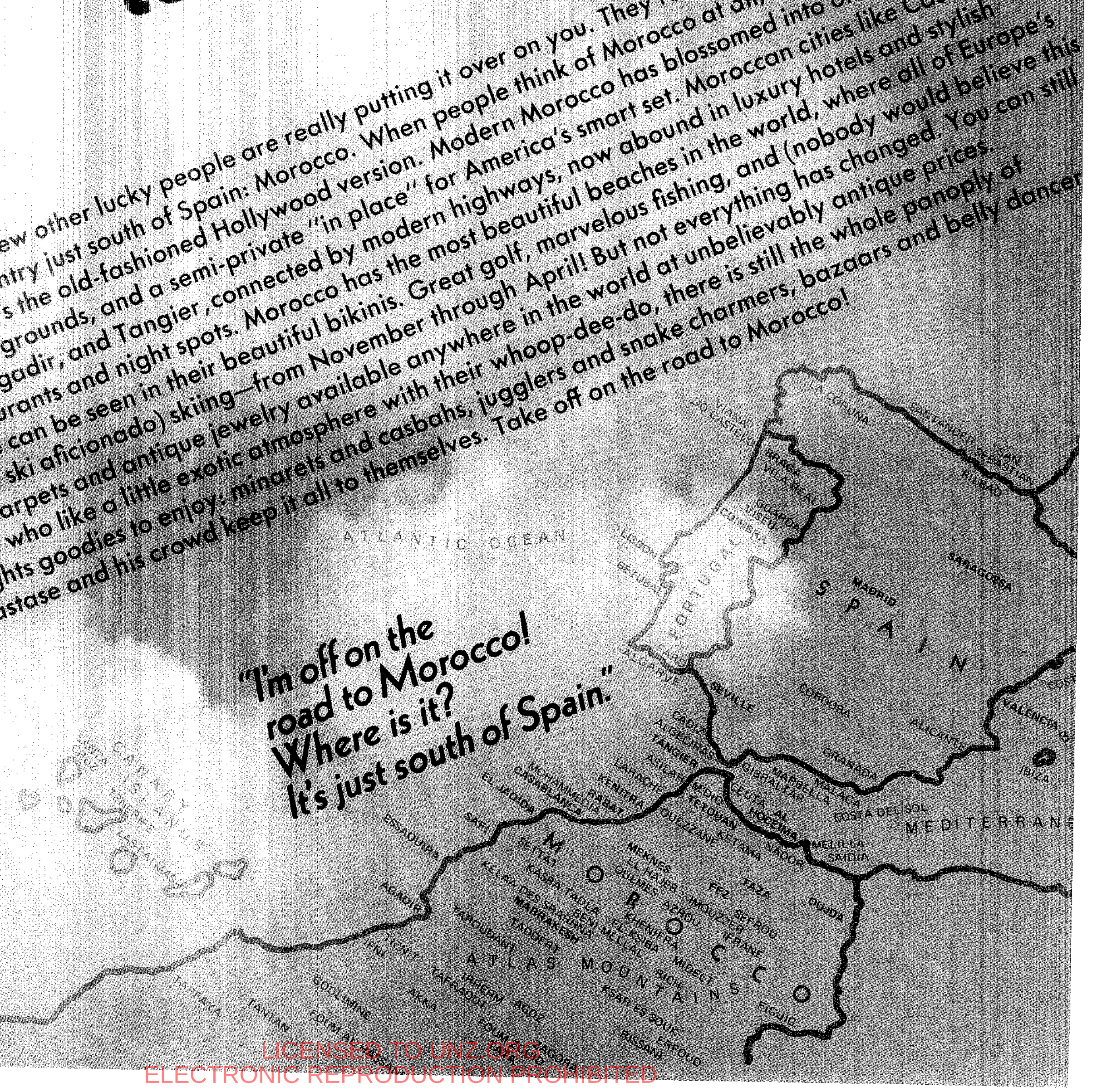


"I'm off on the road to Morocco"

ILIE NASTASE and a few other lucky people are really putting it over on you. They're the only ones who know about a fantastic country just south of Spain: Morocco. When people think of Morocco at all, they think of camels and sand dunes. But that's the old-fashioned Hollywood version. Modern Morocco has blossomed into one of Europe's most exclusive playgrounds, and a semi-private "in place" for America's smart set. Moroccan cities like Casablanca, Marrakesh, Fez, Agadir, and Tangier, connected by modern highways, now abound in luxury hotels and stylish continental restaurants and night spots. Morocco has the most beautiful beaches in the world, where all of Europe's beautiful people can be seen in their beautiful bikinis. Great golf, marvelous fishing, and (nobody would believe this but a European ski aficionado) skiing—from November through April! But not everything has changed. You can still get the finest carpets and antique jewelry available anywhere in the world at unbelievably antique prices. And for those who like a little exotic atmosphere with their whoop-dee-do, there is still the whole panoply of Arabian Nights goodies to enjoy: minarets and casbahs, jugglers and snake charmers, bazaars and belly dancer Don't let Nastase and his crowd keep it all to themselves. Take off on the road to Morocco!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"I'm off on the road to Morocco! Where is it? It's just south of Spain."

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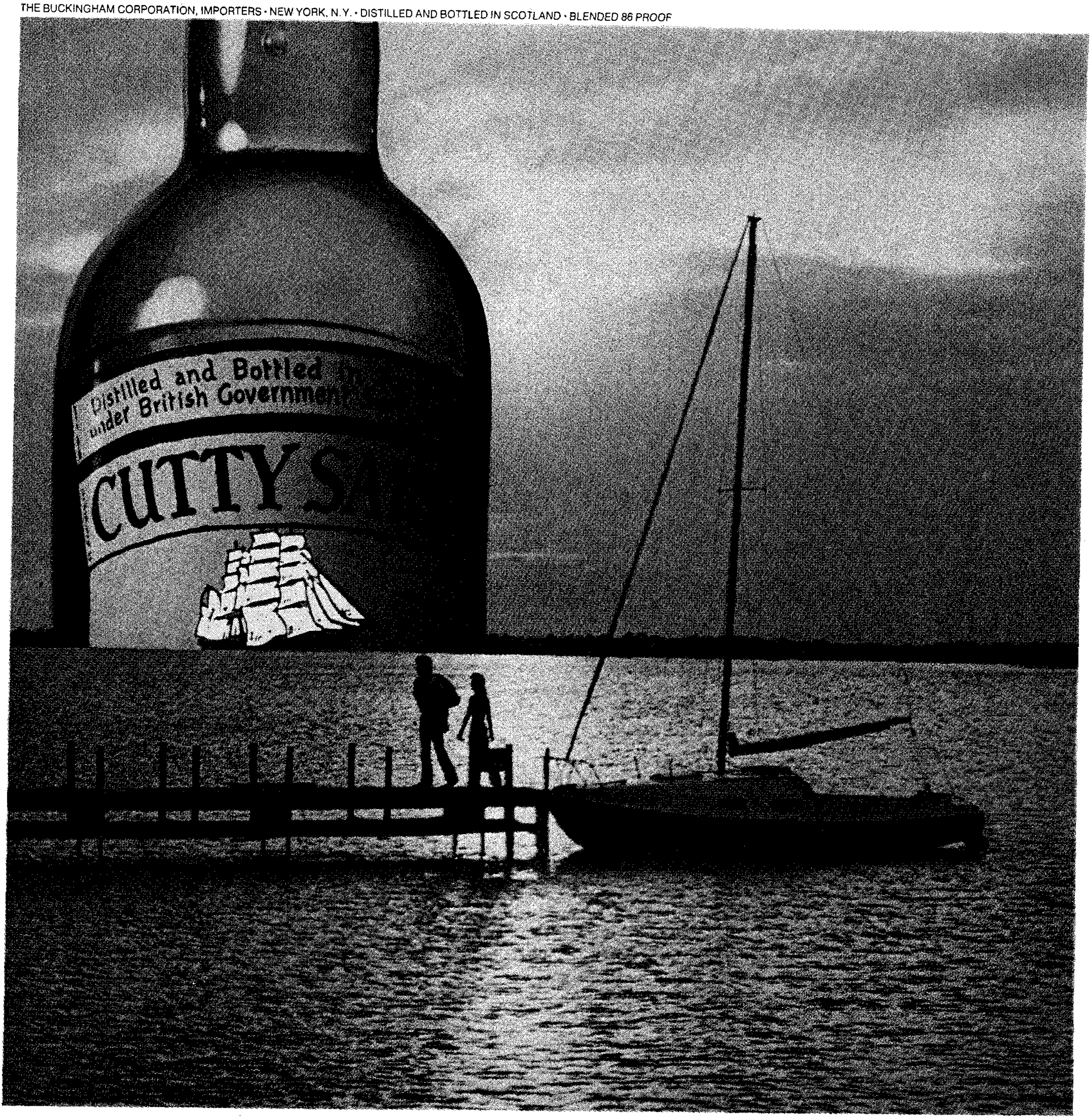
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pointing in actuality, wear a different and more satisfactory aspect which has provided the motive power to carry him through his book. When his work is done, he may feel reassured, half believing that what he has written, because he has asserted it and it has been printed and read by people who assume that the author had some divine revelation of the truth and adopt an attitude toward him based on that assumption—that what he has written must be true.

•

A SHIP at Sea Bright or, on the Shrewsbury, two sailboats, one behind the other but not quite even, so that they had the appearance of one of those small white butterflies perched on the water with closed wings, below the dimmed green ridge of the opposite shore and above the treetops and branching weeds of the river slope in the foreground, against a ground of silver-gray water. What the artist would do to these scenes would be, in the first case, to blur the surrounding colors of the buildings which framed the ship, so that they would harmonize with it and the sky and sea, to gratify some favorite vein of his own; or, in the second, to soften the distinct and prosaic details of the houses, trees, and private docks of the opposite shore, which, even on that misty day, had some of the vulgarity and ugliness of vegetation and human habitations in August (unless, of course, he was someone like Botticelli or Le Douanier Rousseau, who makes everything clear and distinct, so that he incised all the dim lines of the wet day to match the sharpness of the white sails against the water, and brought out the details of the opposite shore with indefatigable industry). He would thus substitute a corrected spectacle for the real one, which, for him, as for everyone else, was only beautiful by reason of the harmonies it *suggested*. He has merely selected something which suggests the sort of harmonies that happen to be sympathetic to his temperament, and modified it in such a way as to please him still more.

•

THE new anomalies and accidents of life continually being assimilated by the artistic faculty, immediately seized upon and encrusted, rendered symmetrical and iridescent, like the oyster's pearl—until, when the oysters have died and only their work remains, the annals of the human race, instead of being a succession of casualties, take on the appearance of a string of pearls. The whole literary and ar-

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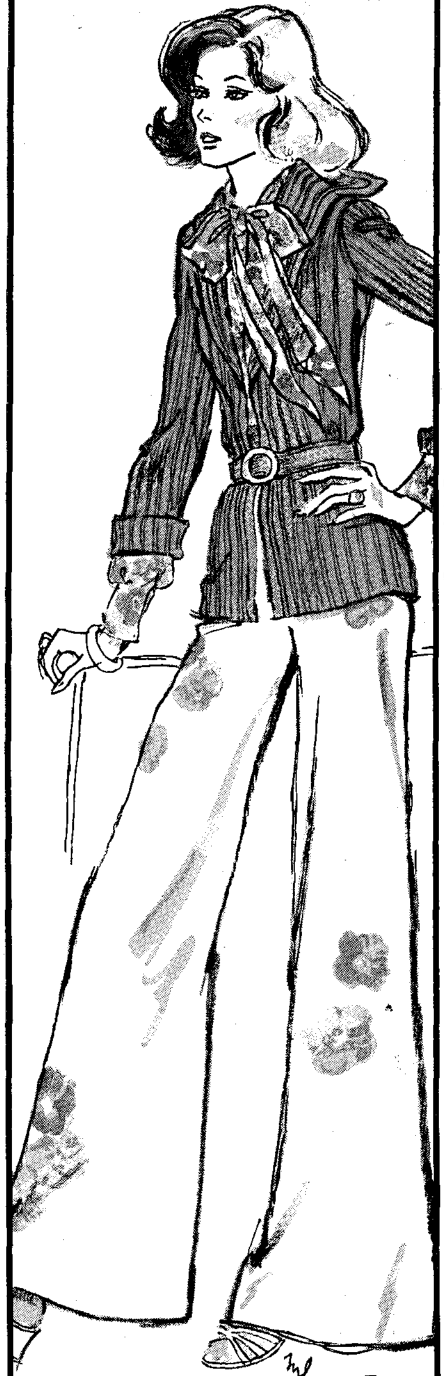

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tistic process merely the type of all human activity, which tends inevitably toward the ordering of the disorderly, the harmonizing of the inharmonious, the decoration of the graceless.

Yet this continual tireless attempt to assimilate experience into art may be only a small beginning at some great assimilation of the universe by humanity.

•

MARY BLAIR and I had separated. I had found it impossible to be married to an actress. She was always at the theatre at night and I was out on the town. I took Rosalind down to my mother's and went to live alone at 229 West Thirteenth Street, in one room with a bathroom. I formed the habit of taking very long weekends at my mother's in Red Bank, where I could be quiet and see Rosalind.

The Hidden Effects of the War

THE men who have been rendered unstable and erratic by their war experience are like those who—like Fred Murphy, for example, who had been blown up in a tank (brother of Gerald and Esther)—were badly shot up and then put together by some surgeons, to survive for only a few years in the constant fear and danger of collapse. When I met Fred Murphy at dinner, I thought him supercilious and didn't like him, because he kept contracting his eyebrows as if he were in pain. He was, but I didn't know it.

•

KATZE, in telephone booth—against the dark background, toned by the dirty glass, with her maroon dress and the high red color of her brownish cheeks contrasting with her deep, large, dark eyes shining out of their shadow, she suggested the shadows and rich color of a Rembrandt. Gerald had said that she had the eyes of a cow and the face of a bee. She was always under a sort of nervous pressure. I noticed it again dining with her for the first time after so long, at the Algonquin. She accused me of being "preoccupied" or "in a bad mood" when I was merely extremely calm and sober. Her intense, solid grasp of the objective world, her terrible objective eye—I felt it again at the "Scandals" (as she had once noticed and commented upon, without drawing any generalities from them, all the buildings and the changes—especially, it seems to me, the inanimate sights—on the way to where she lived on Twelfth Street). Her eye for fabrics and new clothes. She would always comment, though Zitty (her sister Zita, the actress) had told her not to, on new shirts, newly shined shoes—would comment on good material. She admired the back of what I thought was a very plain woman with a very bad figure in the lobby between the acts. Walking with my hand under her arm on the street, I used to feel her full, fleshy breasts—so unexpected on her wiry body—which gave out surprising warmth even through her dress; they redeemed, with a kind of animal heat and fecundity, whatever was of hard and metallic finish about her, whatever it was that made her sometimes seem like a charming and costly bronze and that used to make me feel, at one (estranged) stage of our relations, when I would take her to dinner at Charles's, as if I had acquired some precious and desirable objet d'art rather than as if I were having dinner with a human companion whom I liked and desired.

•

ROSALIND'S little German box of blocks, which Mother bought her for ten cents—so simple and so attractive. The true German taste for toys. Thin, plain wood box with sliding cover, on which appeared four colored pictures of buildings, with little pine trees and palm trees set around them, which could be constructed with the blocks, and into which were compactly packed the carefully proportioned square strips half this width, the special beams stained brown and intended to diversify and distinguish the monuments created, the small corklike green nubbins of pillars, the slim-legged arch with the square top upon which further constructions could be erected, the red arch with the round back, the little solid half circle that made a useful ornament—each of these last sawed neatly out of the one before, so that no wood had been wasted and all fitted compactly into the box. And, finally, most elaborate and, as it were, luxurious and interesting, a little section of stream to be used when one of the arches was made to span a river—deep indigo blue and curled with five corrugated waves, like a tiny washing board. Economy, propriety, proportion, a droll and impeccable taste—simplicity and beauty.

•

JULIUS'S, December, 1927. [I was writing the essay on Yeats in "Axel's Castle" and used to go there when I had finished working, very late at night. It was a more or less horrible bar, which sold Prohibition beer but was the only place open all night.] Crowd, extraordinary pictures, Mabel Normand, etc. Amiable bartender, with

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old-fashioned sweetness and geniality, rose complexion, toothbrush mustache, and black, oiled, curly hair. Disagreeable assistant, who gypped me on two beers ("That'll be a dollar"). Stuffed alligator as big as a horse, posed sprawling against the mirror. Free lunch.

Polly Holliday presently emerged from a crowd where I'd thought I knew nobody. She seemed to know everybody; knew old man with big, black shoestring bow tie and beard, who turned out to be editor of an anarchist paper (Hippolyte Havel). Cecil Fiske (Agnes O'Neill's sister) also appeared in corner—red-eyed, very drunk, indiscriminately amorous, but still with her pre-Raphaelite hair. Her husband kept saying, "Have another drink!" and then not ordering any. He treated her abominably, and abandoned her completely. He kept wanting to drink to Herman Melville: "Drink to the same man!"

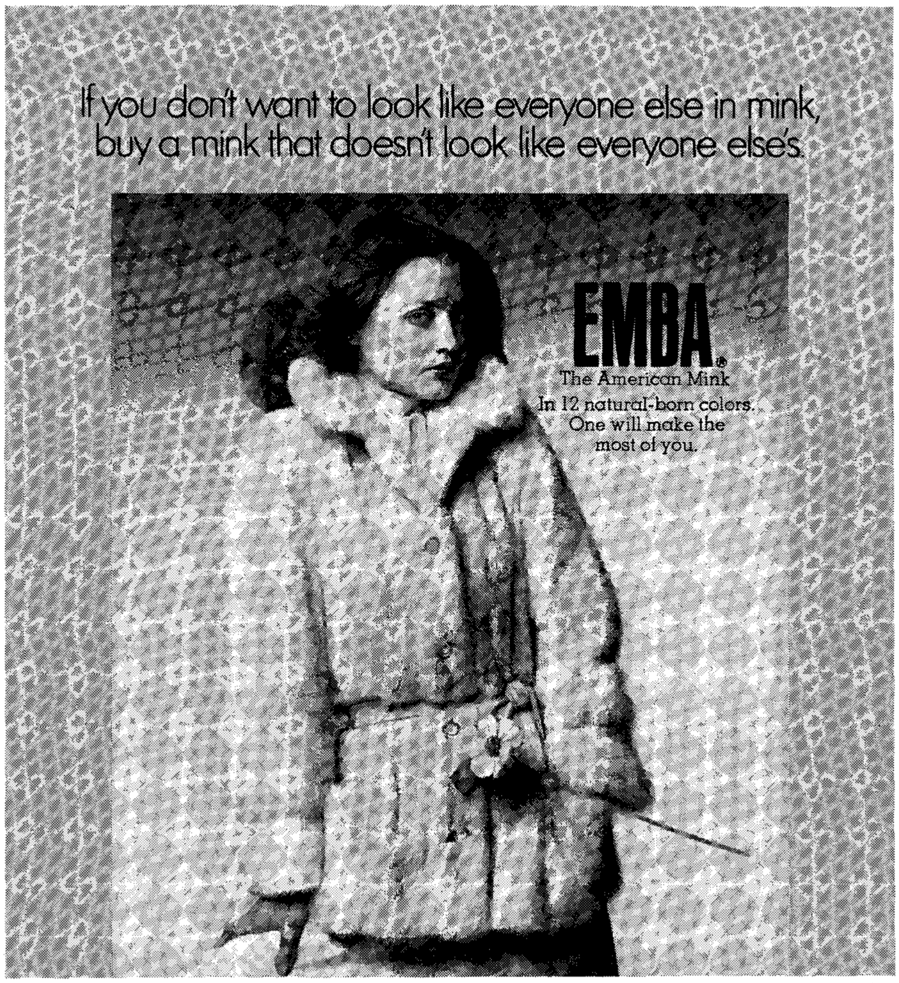
Anarchist (H. H.): "Morss Lovett and all those nice boys might just as well be writing for an anarchist paper!" Of W. Z. Foster: "He's an intellectual!" Of Mike Gold: "He's an intellectual!" "The Socialists, the Communists, the anarchists! They can't write a single sentence!" A Babbitt in the corner asked him whether he wanted to see people killed, or something of the sort. He clasped his forehead and gasped. I explained that an anarchist wasn't necessarily a person who wanted to blow up other people.

ROSALIND: DECEMBER, 1927

I POKED her nose and said, "What's that?" "That's my nose. I don't like it very much!" I asked her why not, and she said, "Oh, it's bothersome!" She used to go around, before going to bed in New York, with her blue bathrobe and the blue bunny slippers, which made her feet look enormous. She would make me act out Chicken Little and Half-Chick with her, insisting upon my doing Chicken Little first, because that was the order in which it was printed in the book, and refusing to let me refer to the book for the dialogue. "A chicken doesn't have a book!"

•

THE artist's conception of what he is going to produce is something far less personal than what results, because he is really, in re-imagining things, striving toward a completeness that is beyond the powers of the individual human being; and the artist's mannerisms, his strongly marked style, which his admirers particularly savor, may really, from the point of view of



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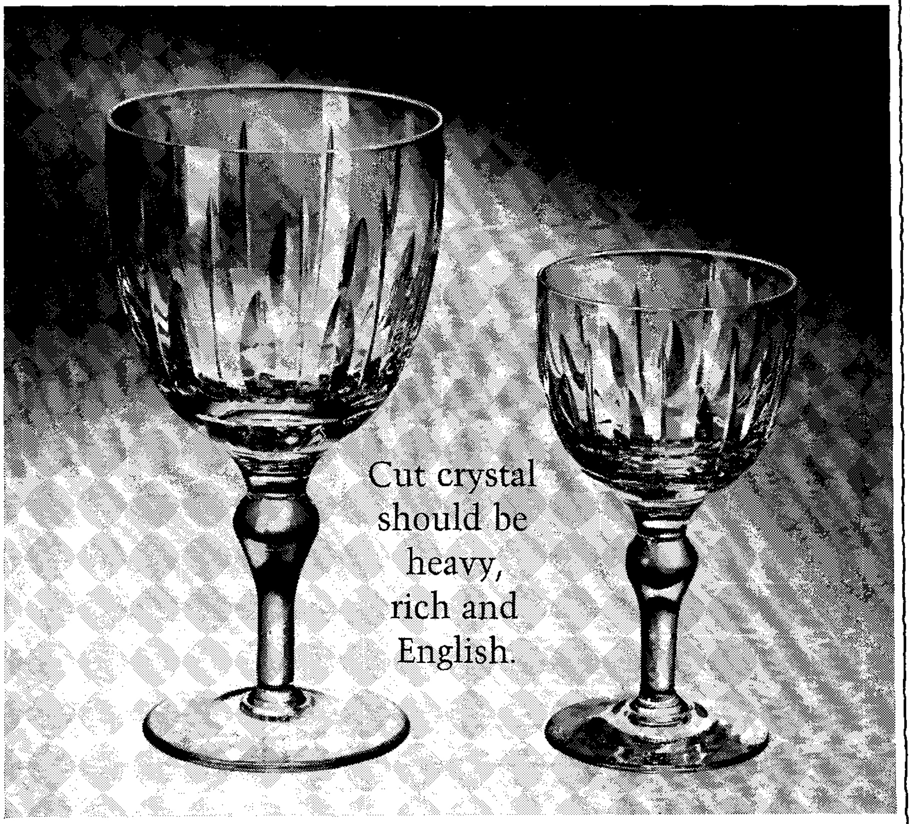

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his ambition and his first conception, represent merely the limitations of habit, the lapse into the line of least resistance, the regretted but inescapable stigmata—like a can tied to a dog's tail—of his physical peculiarities, his family failings, and the limitations of his nation and race.

•

DON'T forget history: Burke, G. B. Shaw, immediately, in their pamphlets, painting the coating of reason and art over contemporary events and thereby reassuring people (Burke on the French Revolution, Shaw's "Common Sense About the War"). When things happen, they seem to happen not in the world of literature—except in that cultivated conversation which is a form of literature—but in a barbarous animal world, bloody, ignoble, uncontrollable. We must at once adopt an attitude toward them, whether comic, tragic, or scientifically detached; we must divert our fellows from simply groping or from becoming panic-stricken, like people staring at a street accident or stampeding out of a burning theatre—and that attitude is embodied in literature.

•

PHILOSOPHY and Logic—also Scholarship. One says, "This position is open to certain serious objections," or, "This position presents certain serious difficulties"—merely a dignified and pompous way of expressing one's abject ignorance and the ludicrous puerile inadequacy of the only accounts one can give of the conditions of our existence.

•

THE moralists, indulging, like Shaw, in the ignoble pleasure of making other people feel small.

•

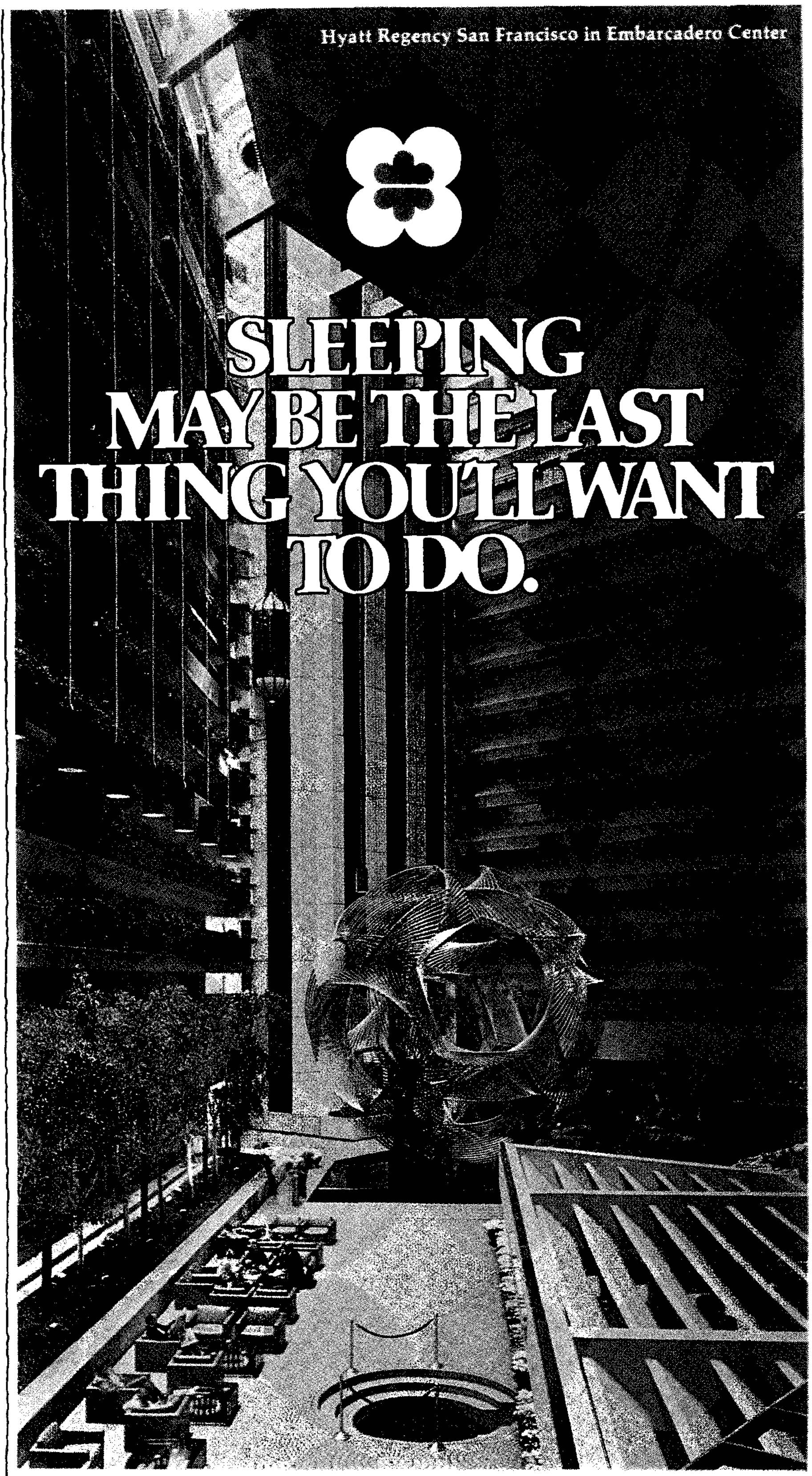
THE basic impossibility of a common denominator between pain and tranquillity—a discord which art tries to resolve.

•

THE great convention of all literature which we learn with effort and to which we deliberately ascend from the turbid chaos of life.

•

AND writers who were noted for *sober judgment!* I remembered that such small reputation as I had achieved was apparently based on the supposed sober judgment of a few literary articles and reviews, yet, except when I was writing about literature, no-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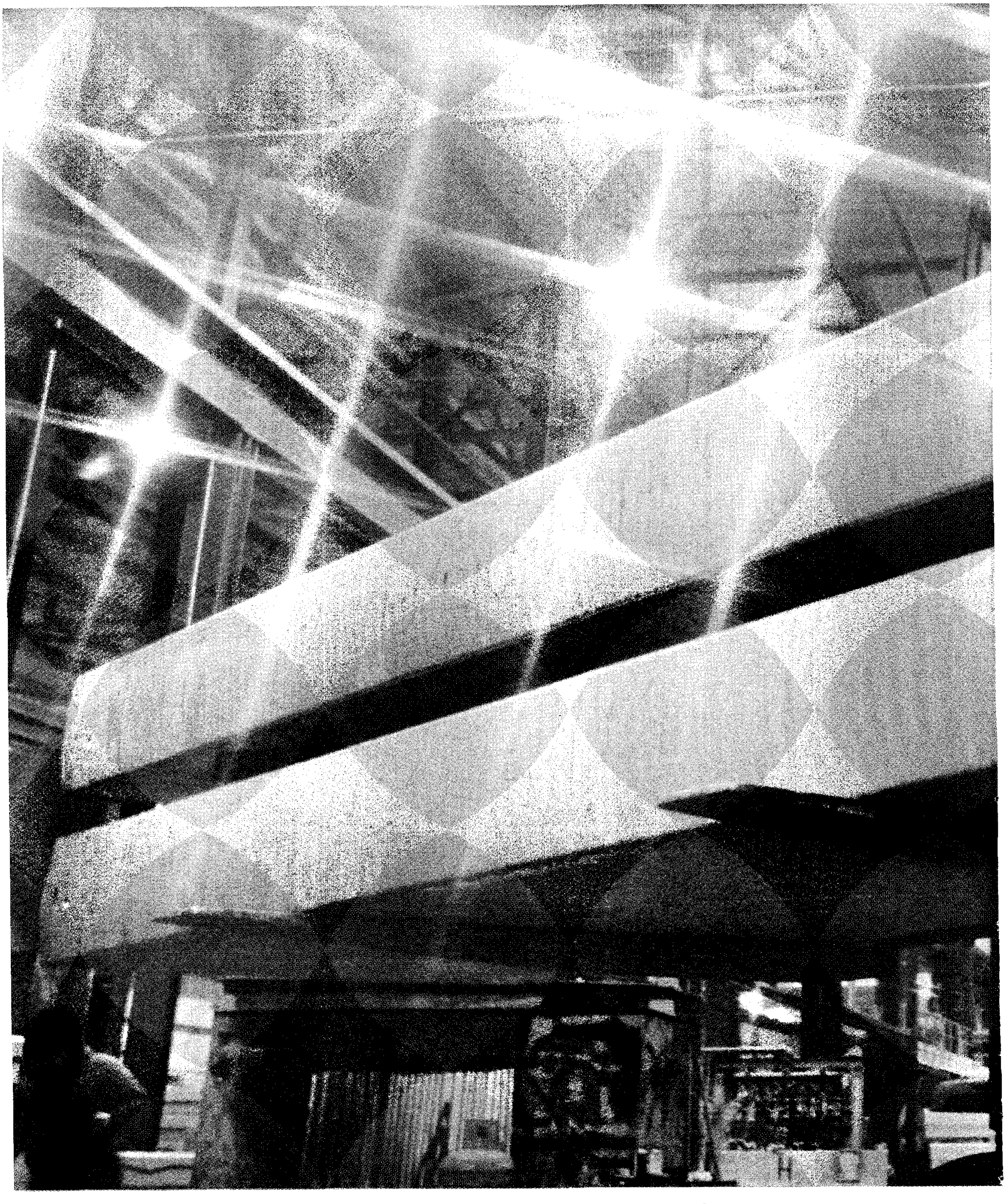
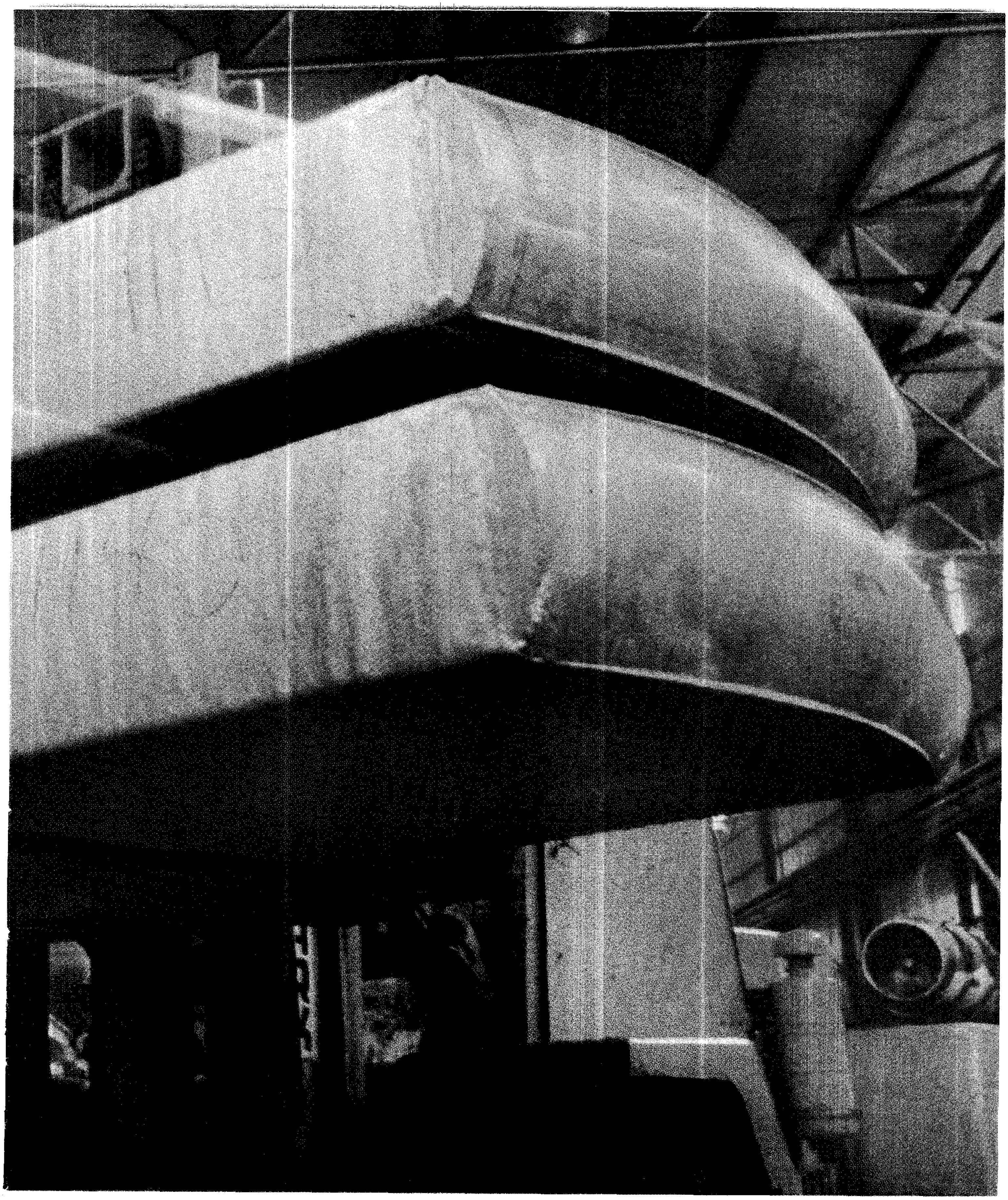


The Industrialists...



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body could have worse judgment and I was invariably either treating occasions of importance either too casually or too flippantly or extravagantly overdoing other occasions which were intrinsically trivial—disgracefully underestimating or grotesquely overstating—and the sober judgment that, by an effort, I was sometimes able to muster in print was nothing more than compensation for the disappointments and humiliations of a life which never hit the mark or suited the means to the end.

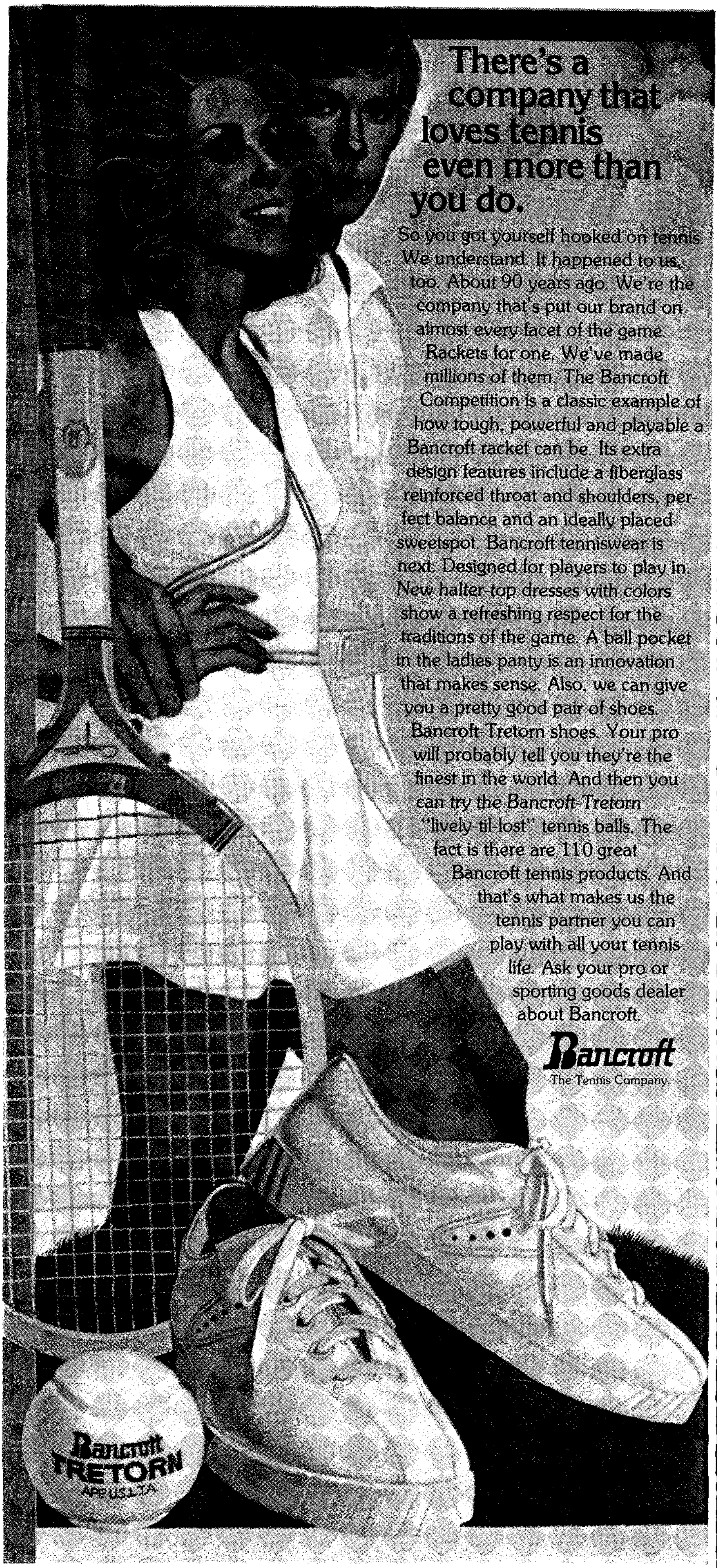
•

HOUSMAN putting all his sensitive and affectionate heart into sixty or seventy slight lyrics and spending all the rest of his intellect on the reconstruction of the Latin text of a poet inferior to himself and all the rest of his passion upon the excoriation of obscure scholars who have happened not to distinguish themselves in his own field.

•

LITERATURE is merely the result of our rude collisions with reality, whose repercussions, when we have withdrawn into the shelter of ourselves, we try to explain, justify, harmonize, spin into an orderly pattern in the smooth, resuming current of a thought which for a moment has been shattered and torn by them; they become mere colors and forms that can soothe and amuse the placidity of other minds or that, in the press of circumstances or actions, can super-induce that state of reflective detachment—for even the highest excitement of imaginative vision *is* a state of reflection and detachment. Literature is a long process of neutralizing these shocks, mitigating the crude and barbarous, treachery, murder, unrequited love (anomalies must be included as well as crimes)—the constant, never-forestalled outbreaks of our barbarous nature and the accidents of the internal maladjustments of our situation as a part of the universe. We lend them, in art, the logic of our reason and the harmony of our imagination. Reason and imagination, like leukocytes accumulating themselves at the place where the infection, in the physical system, has occurred, rush at once to the breach and, ingesting the alien elements, are discharged in the form of art—so we are able to laugh at or to weep at these casualties, relieving, in the one case, our worried intelligence and, in the other, our balked emotions (through the operation of the aesthetic process, whatever that is), and the wound is presently healed.

—EDMUND WILSON (1895-1972)



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THE THEATRE

ON SEEING STARS

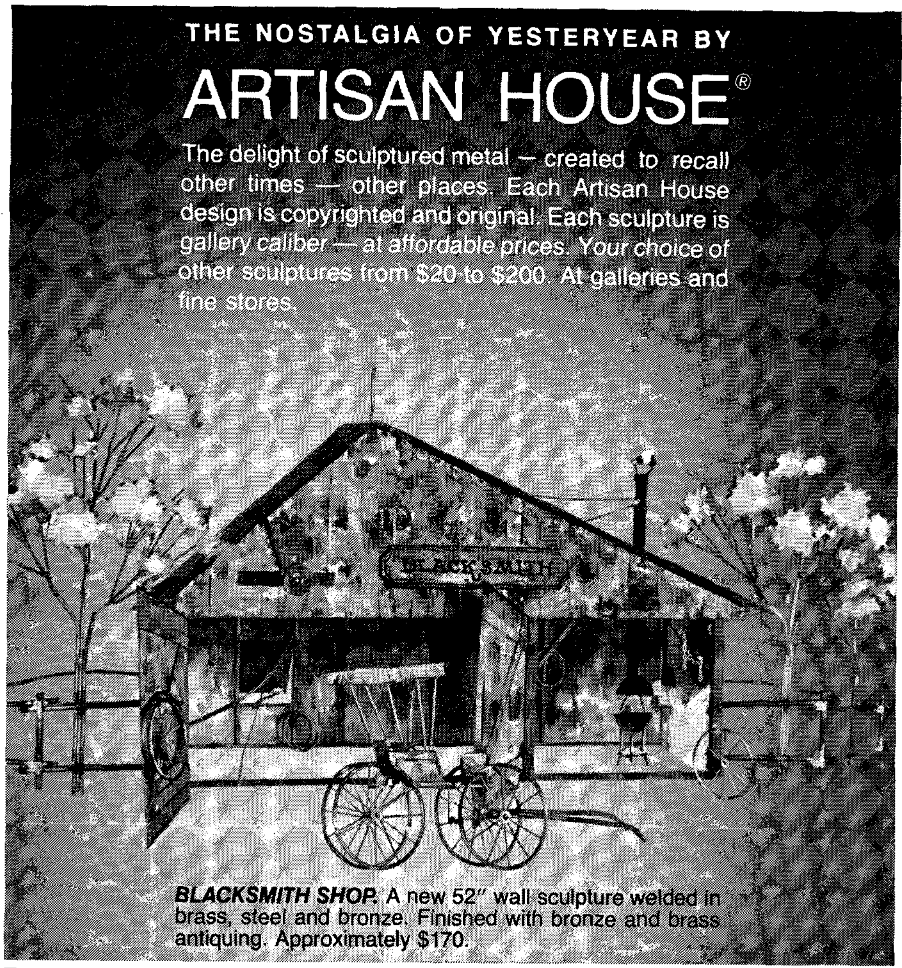
TWO remarkable women came to Broadway last week: Ingrid Bergman and Bette Midler. Offhand, one might be tempted to say of them that few performers on earth have as little in common as they do, save for gender and a temporary propinquity—Miss Bergman is appearing at the Shubert, in Somerset Maugham's rickety old drawing-room comedy "The Constant Wife," and Miss Midler is appearing at the Minskoff, a few yards across Shubert Alley, in a revue infelicitously named "Clams on the Half Shell." It happens that one's offhand temptation had better be resisted, for the two women have much in common, despite the many obvious differences between them in respect to age, appearance, temperament, ethnic origin, and professional methods: they are both superstars, who instantaneously command very large audiences wherever they go throughout the country, who never fail to bring down the house, and whose followings are plainly much less devoted to the theatre as such than to the performers as emblems of some life of infinite possibility not available to ordinary mortals. In short, they are cult figures, who have only to appear in public, under no matter what fortunate or unfortunate circumstances, in order to be worshipped. Since by definition they can do no wrong, criticism of them becomes not merely an irrelevance but a form of obtuseness.

Nevertheless, the risk of seeming obtuse must be taken. Maugham's dry little comedy of almost half a century ago had, and has, a certain merit: it argues that sexual fidelity in marriage is not a very lofty goal for either husbands or wives to aim at, and that open adultery openly arrived at may well be the most practical means of keeping marriages together. The characters in "The Constant Wife" are supposed to be upper-class Londoners in their middle thirties, who are right to have sex very much on their minds. Alas, Miss Bergman is in the neighborhood of sixty, and care has been taken to surround her with actors and actresses of tactfully commensurate ages, with the unlucky result that we find ourselves observing not the amorous adventures of young Londoners but the geriatric misadventures of a handful of stiffly frisky folk in Sunset City. Out of embarrassment, I found myself often looking away.

Alan Tagg has designed a very pleasant Harley Street drawing room, and Beatrice Dawson has run up some costumes evocative of the twenties, if not representative of them. The direction, by John Gielgud, is stately, but I suspect that this is in order to accommodate Miss Bergman's fans, who wish to hear every syllable of every word of every line she utters.

Miss Midler's fans are radically unlike Miss Bergman's—they are of another generation, and they might just as well be from another planet. Young and joyous and noisy, as Miss Midler herself is, they wish to be deafened by every syllable of every word of every song she sings, and so they are. How Miss Midler keeps from being deafened by her own terrifyingly amplified voice is a secret she shares with her S.-and-M. sound engineers; it is possible that she uses Flents, for nothing that takes place on the stage of the Minskoff requires her to hear her fellow-performers, who include the Michael Powell Ensemble, a group called the Harlettes, and Lionel Hampton. Mr. Hampton assaults with astonishing vigor a vibraphone, a piano, and a set of drums, and even dances a few saucy steps. Though Miss Midler is comparatively new to fame, she has a tendency to parody some imaginary previously famous Bette Midler, and she retains, not to her advantage, some of the raunchy jokes and fat-girl mannerisms of the days of her apprenticeship. She is on her way to becoming one of our great natural wonders, like Mt. Whit-

"When you want a cop, try and find one."



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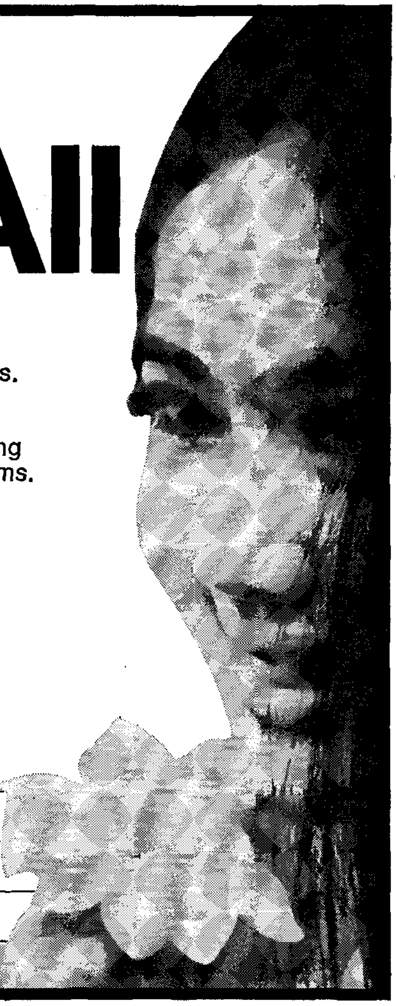

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The silly and wonderful sets and costumes of "Clams on the Half Shell" are by Tony Walton (who must have borrowed the opening-scene backdrop of a Mississippi river-boat from the Jerome Kern estate); the lighting is by Beverly Emmons. The revue has been directed and choreographed by Joe Layton, and the sound, as I have been telling my ear doctor, is by Stan Miller.

—BRENDAN GILL

•

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[*Leaflet in the box containing a Thermos bottle bought in Algiers*]

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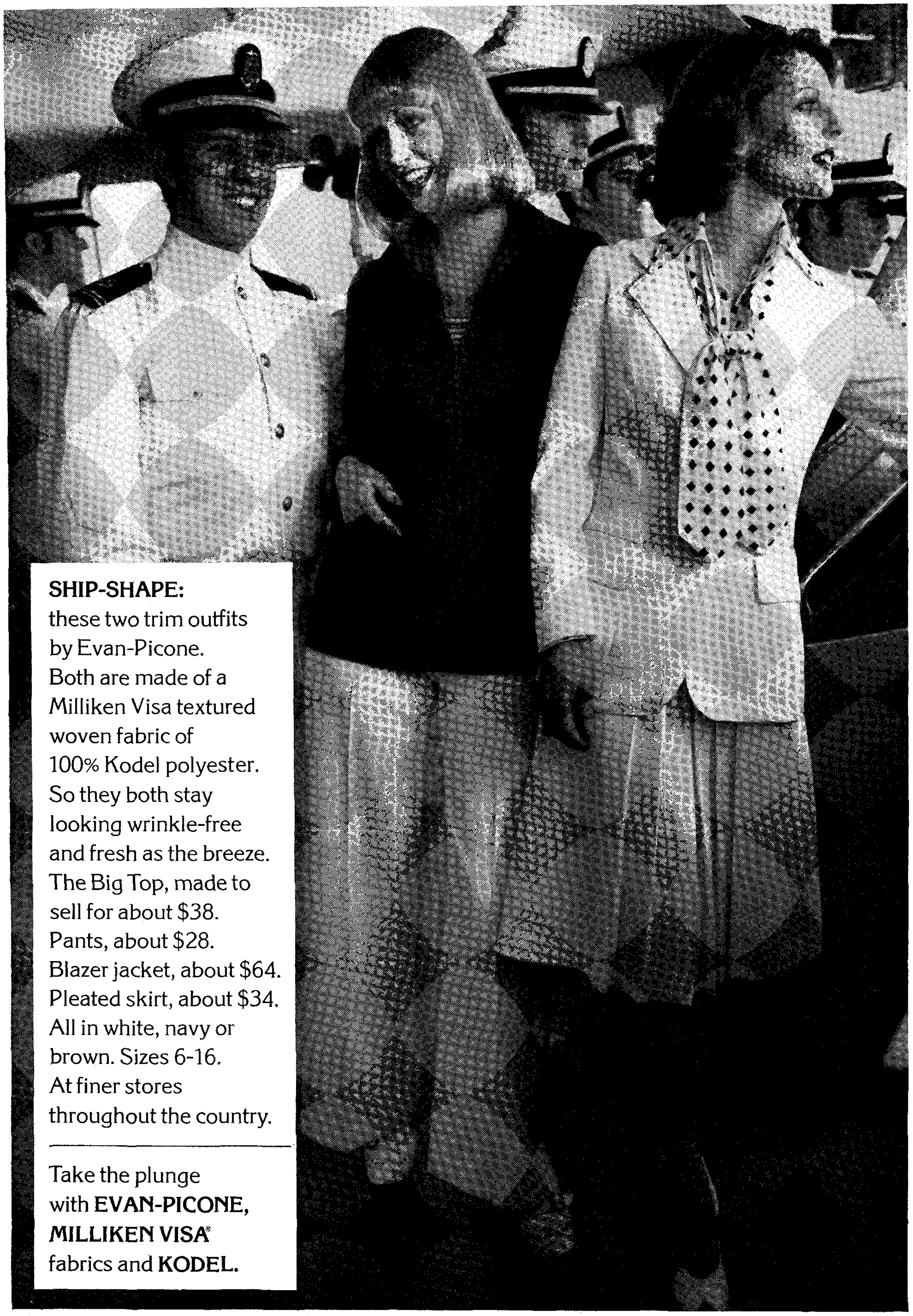

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THE RACE TRACK

On to the Derby!

APRIL 21

EVER so many aficionados who went to gray and windy Aqueduct last Saturday came away convinced that they'd seen the next Kentucky Derby winner in Foolish Pleasure, who, as expected, won the Wood Memorial Stakes. Although he beat Bombay Duck, who led for most of the mile and a furlong, by only a head, it was an impressive performance, and in my book Foolish Pleasure is as good as he ever was—maybe better. The picture of health, his coat shining, the big bay star of last season was on looks easily the pick of the lot in the paddock and in the parade to the post. Drawn fifteenth—the outside post position—he faced the danger of being carried wide in the scramble to the first turn and being stranded there, but when the stall gates opened Vasquez had him away on his toes and, as I saw the race, got him to about fourth place by the time the field rounded the turn. Meanwhile, nimble Bombay Duck made it to the rails, where he reeled off the quarters in 0:23⅖, 0:46⅗, 1:10⅗, and 1:35⅖, while Foolish Pleasure held smoothly not far behind him. The bay made his move at about the three-quarters pole, but turning into the stretch he went wide, and from there on it was touch and go till the last jump. Vasquez must be given full marks for his ride, which Foolish Pleasure will remember, for the jockey didn't spare the whip.

Needless to say, Leroy Jolley, who trains Foolish Pleasure, and John L. Greer, the Knoxville banker and baker who owns him, were delighted, and Mrs. Greer, whose birthday it was, said that she couldn't have had a nicer present. Foolish Pleasure came out of the race $72,840 richer, with no aggravation of the foot problems that had been bothering him recently, and will now be getting ready for his trip to Churchill Downs for the Kentucky Derby on May 3rd. Bombay Duck will be going too, and most likely Media, who finished third. The Wood was run in 1:48⅘—first-rate time, taking account of the wind and whatnot—but an hour before, Line Officer, a three-year-old from the Meadow Stable, did the distance a fifth of a second faster. The same stable's Lefty finished tenth in the Wood.

EARLIER in the week, another star, the Locust Hill Farm's Ruffian, last season's best two-year-old filly, returned to the races to participate in a six-furlong sprint at Aqueduct. An unbeaten daughter of Reviewer, she brought a big crowd to the paddock, and everybody got an eyeful. A sizable package last year, she has grown into as imposing and as handsome an individual as you'd care to see. She must stand 16.3 hands, and she towered over the four other starters. In the race, she took the lead quickly, winning from Sir Ivor's Sorrow by nearly five lengths. Frank Whiteley, Jr., who trains her, seldom talks about his horses, but he seemed pleased.

On the same afternoon, Aqueduct offered the first race of the season for two-year-olds. Calumet Farm won it with Turn to Turia—a good-looking bay colt by Best Turn out of Princess Turia—who ran the five furlongs in 0:58⅕. As you may have noticed, he's a half brother of Calumet's last Kentucky Derby winner, Forward Pass.

LADIES' DAY: At Pimlico last weekend, Mrs. Taylor Hardin's Gulls Cry, Mrs. Richard Worthington's Sarah Percy, and Mrs. John M. Franklin's Twixt finished—in that order—in a photo for the Gallorette Handicap, at a mile and a sixteenth. Twixt carried 127 pounds and gave ten to the winner.

IN the California Derby out at Golden Gate Fields last weekend, Diabolo won by four and a half lengths from George Navonod. Now he'll go to Kentucky wearing blinkers. Seems they did the trick for him.

—AUDAX MINOR

•

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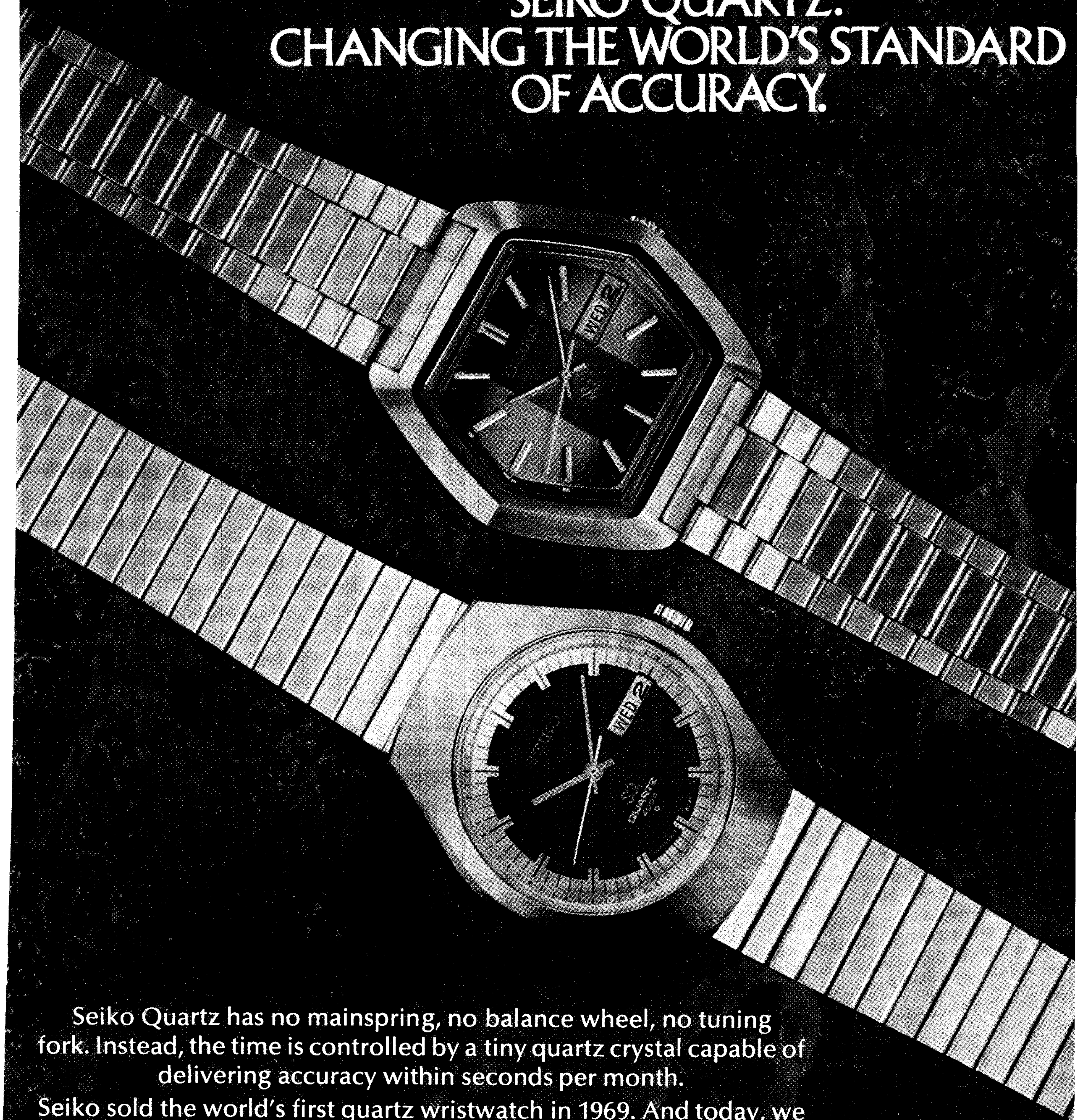

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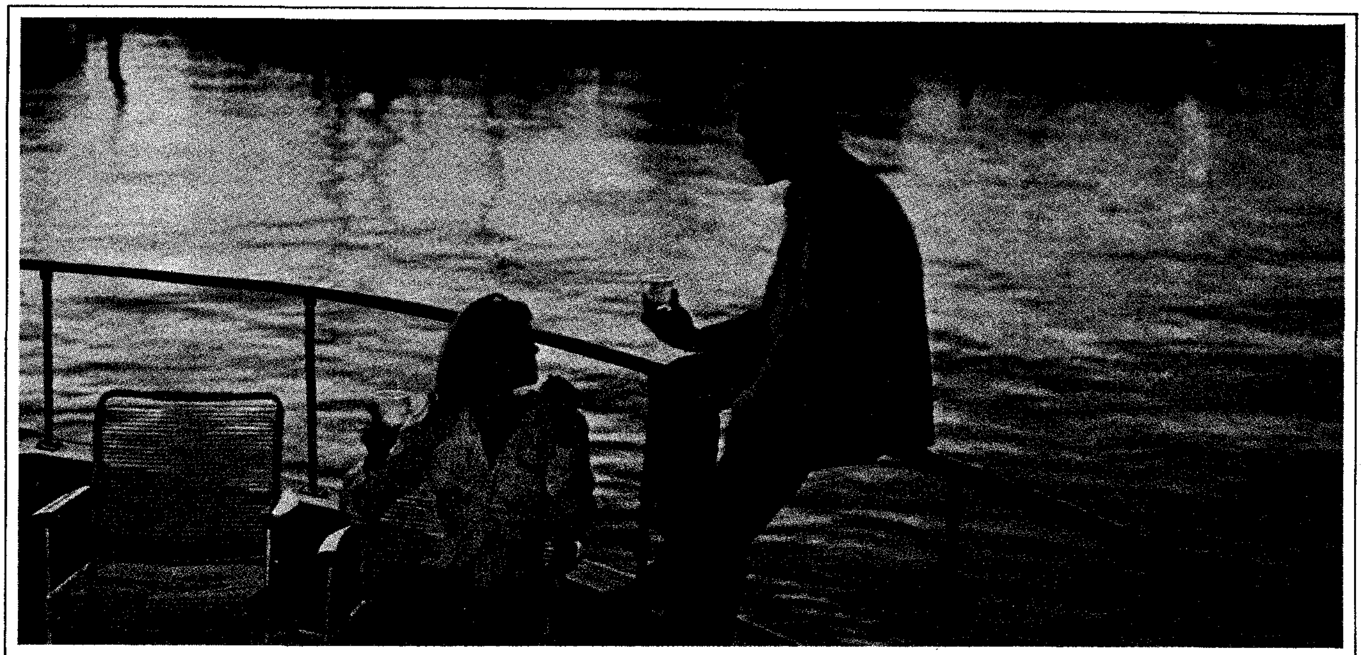

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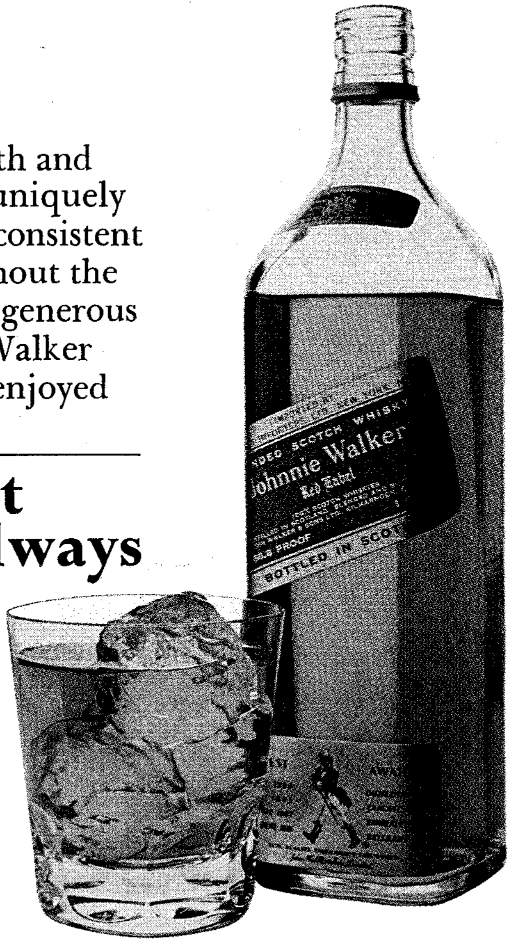
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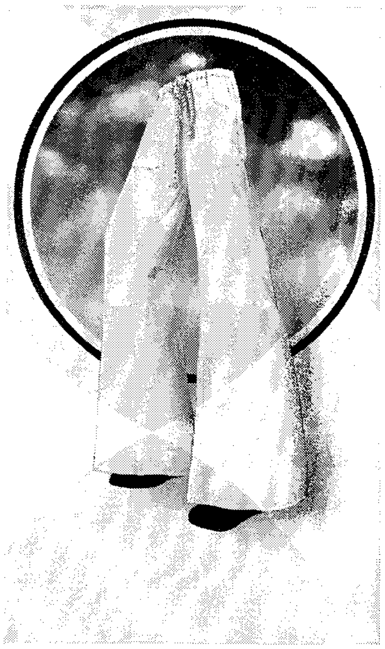
ON AND OFF THE AVENUE

FEMININE FASHIONS

THE haute couture is a degenerate institution propped up by a sycophantic press. When the couture houses of Paris make their twice-yearly presentations for the benefit of the world's fashion journalists—although some of these have defected and now attend only the shows of the more dynamic prêt-à-porter, around six hundred devoted followers remain unswervingly loyal to the haute couture—the two sides are in cahoots to get outsiders to believe that something is going on that is not going on: novelty. This first deception is compounded by a second: neither side really believes that novelty is valuable, even if it *were* what they were both launching with such ritualistic fuss. Despite the battle cries of journalists and the caprices of designers, the principle of a sensible, "evolving" wardrobe, with basic pieces and layers that carry women through from season to season and from year to year, is now widely accepted—at least in theory and in private—even by journalists and designers. But these sensible wardrobes, calmly acquired, do not generate publicity, which provides the direct livelihood of most fashion journalists and the indirect livelihood of all couture houses. This publicity often proves mystifying to an observer from the world outside the couture citadel. The recent revelations about the spring collections of the Paris couture are a case in point. Weeks before the showings, carefully orchestrated rumors were put about, originally by French fashion journalists and then by their colleagues elsewhere in the world, all more than willing to let it be known that they had access to inside secrets and were onto a "scoop," that there were going to be some "dramatic changes." Fashion was about to undergo a transformation, the newshounds' message ran, from the long, wide, and tentlike to the shorter, slim, and tubelike. Such announcements made weird reading, particularly on this side of the Atlantic. The width that was soon to be consigned to oblivion because "everyone in Paris was bored with it" (actually, the style had been in evidence only for some three months, worn by a fashion-conscious minority in a few corners of that city) had barely crossed the sights of even fashion-conscious women in America. But American manufacturers, dazzled by *anything* at all that had caught on in Paris last fall, had already put many versions of voluminousness into the pipelines for the spring and summer seasons, and fashion publicists gave birth to one of their finest barbarisms—"The BigLook"—to describe the coming style. (In spite of all these preparations, it is by no means clear that American women will buy up all the smocks, tents, and maternity shapes they are supposed to. What goes down in Paris in the fall isn't necessarily going to go down in an American summer.) The prospect of a precipitate halt in the advance of width and the impending arrival of "the tube" seemed to mere outsiders a nightmarish return to the days when couturiers sat around scheming up shapes to substitute for those of women.

As it turned out, though, the fashion press was leading its readers through the looking glass to inspect the emperor's new clothes—and not for the first time. At the spring collections, Dior's Bohan came up with some pretty, if untubular, dresses quite like pretty dresses he has come up with in the past; Ungaro bared the knee, but listlessly, in what looked like hairdressers' gowns; Givenchy showed straight-skirted gabardine dresses in the style that conventional, middle-aged women throughout the world have never ceased to wear. Most of the remaining twenty or so houses, each of whose presentations every fashion journalist dutifully attends, showed clothes that were merely boring. But some of them succeeded in demonstrating, simultaneously, contempt for the women they supposedly design for, by way of skirts you couldn't walk in, and such absurdities as a sundress made of tweed, and contempt for the women in the audience, by way of shabby and unprofessional presentation, and parades that were completely unedited grab bags of different themes or interminable repetitions of a single theme. The show by Yves Saint Laurent could not be faulted in the way it was presented. But it contained the group of dresses that were apparently the origin of all the pre- and post-collection mumbo-jumbo about revolutions and tubes. There is nothing either *new* or extraordinary about these dresses, but by the time the journalists arrived to view them they had fallen victim to their own predictions of novelty and were unable to put on the brakes. The dresses sent some fashion editorialists off into the sort of ecstatic prose that no fashion magazine has felt sufficiently authoritative to indulge in for several years. They burbled recklessly on about how all women were going to want to see themselves in dresses in the Saint Laurent style so much that by fall they would undoubtedly want to change their figures, if necessary, and get themselves in trim for the new millennium of fashion. Saint Laurent's dresses are elegant enough—but only on a sylphlike form—and they have an uncompromising purity and simplicity of taste that seems right for the



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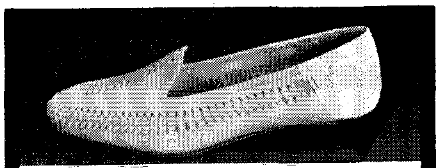

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times. But then so have T-shirts, which are what these dresses are based on, and whose anti-fashion character they share, except they happen to be translated in hugely expensive black-and-white-striped silk jersey. In all but this fabric, the Saint Laurent dresses resemble, in their several lengths and variations, such well-established favorites over here as Clovis Ruffin's fifty-dollar dresses in stripy nylon knit; those Lacoste chemise dresses with the crocodile trademark, which are washable and good for golf; and all the hundreds of thousands of ankle-length T-shirt dresses that tanned young matrons with good figures have enjoyed wearing for at least five years as they pad around barefoot in their patios.

THERE is perhaps more excuse for fashion journalists' participation in this and a host of past conspiracies to fool the public about what the haute couture produces because they sense—probably with justice—that if they allow the idea to die that fashion is ceaselessly new and always obligatory many of them will find themselves out of a job. For the couture houses to sustain the myth of novelty is more cynical, though, because they now survive and thrive not through innovation at all but simply by promoting their prestige—in other words, by convincing customers that what they are spending so lavishly on is guaranteed to be the same, "established" old thing. In many respects, the haute couture is far from being what the careless scanner of fashion pages—with memories of the legendary postwar artistry of Dior, Balenciaga, and Fath; of the space-age, early-sixties energy of Courrèges and Cardin; even of the conscientiously "relevant" styles that came from Saint Laurent five years ago—might believe. The launching of new styles and their reproduction to the measure of private clients—the strict definition of haute couture—are now only the largely unprofitable tip of the couture houses' surprisingly diverse business empires. There are no longer enough private customers to make up for the losses incurred in the production of some two hundred samples a year—many of them intended merely to help out journalists who cover the shows by providing striking photographs and spice for jaded copy. The losses from producing these samples are written off because the press showings at which they are displayed result in such spectacular free publicity for the couture name that is borne by a swarm of secondary products. Most couturiers now also produce ready-to-wear col-

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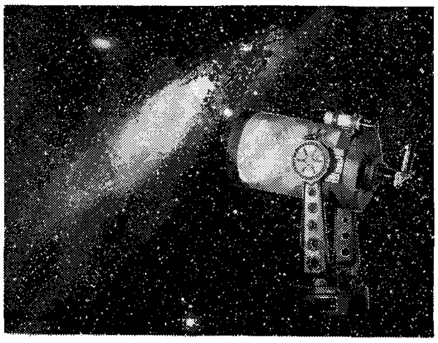

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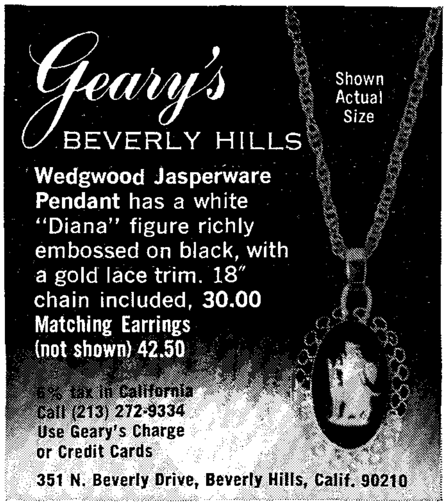

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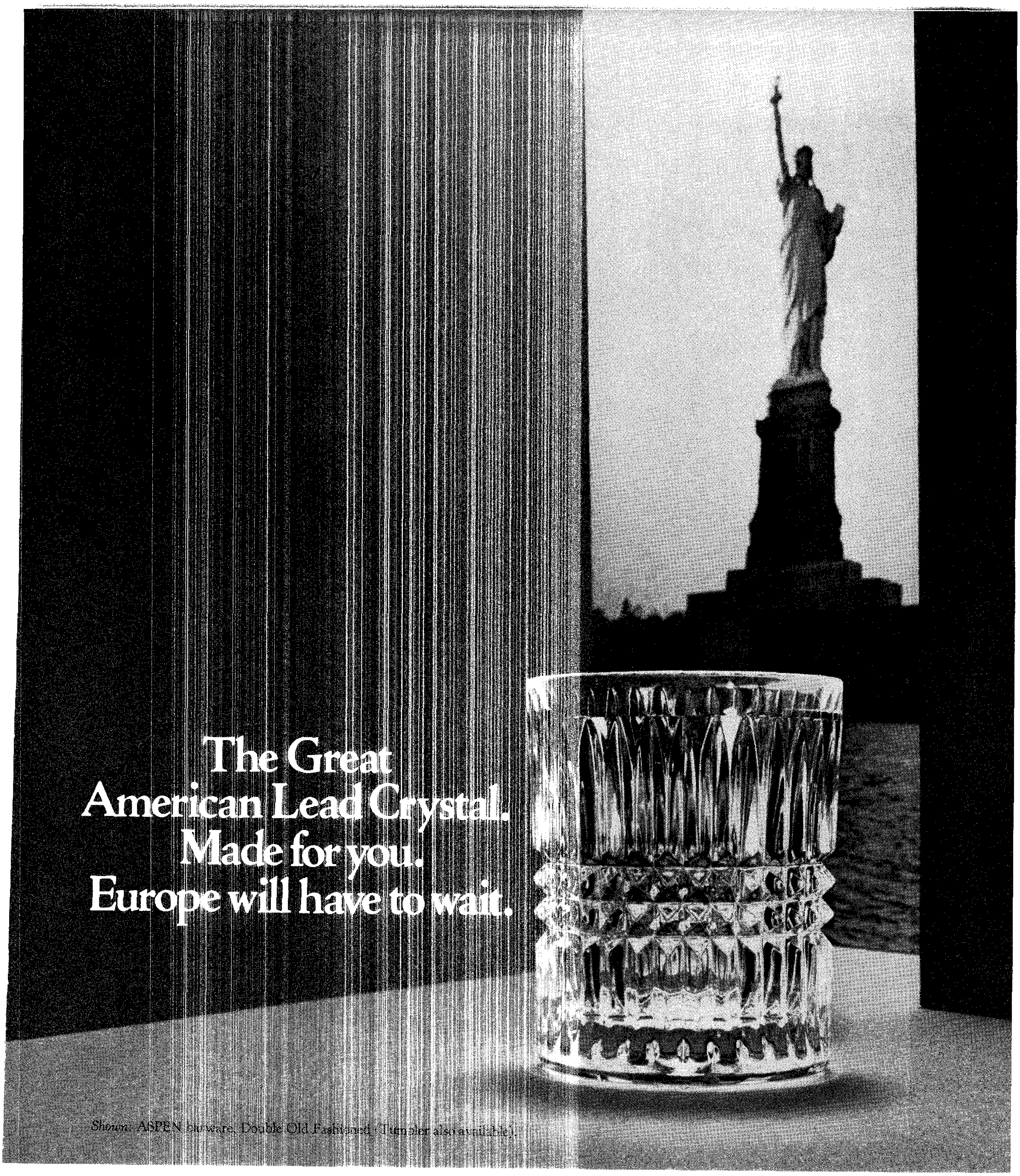
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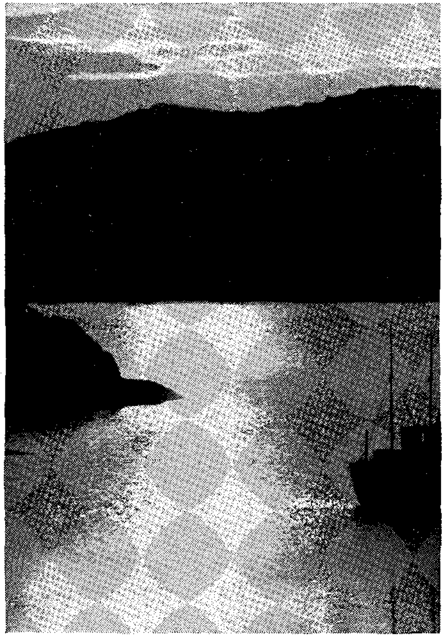

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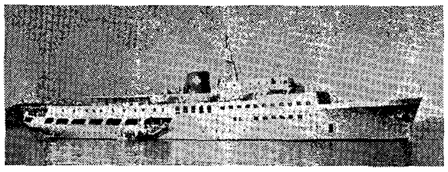

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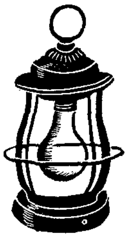
lections—often for men as well as women, and with accompanying accessories—on the side, and these are distributed by way of boutiques that spread the couturiers' fame throughout the world's most lucrative markets. Sometimes these subsidiary collections are actually designed by their namesake and produced under his watchful eye. More often, though, they are designed by someone else, then manufactured by a completely separate concern, often far from France, under a system of foreign licenses that are sold outright by a couturier or from which he collects royalties. Some couturiers take pride in their reputation, and make a conscientious effort to leave a mark of their personal taste on products that bear their name; other couturiers are greedy and careless, and permit their name to appear on ugly, badly made goods displayed in grubby shops.

There is wide disagreement among couturiers about how far the idea of products related to the couture can be stretched before the name that has been so liberally scattered is debased, bringing the whole golden edifice of prestige crashing down, amid public derision, around the ears of couturiers both good and bad. Pierre Cardin is often singled out for criticism because he lends his name not just to predictable articles like sweaters, neckties, and necklaces but also to a seemingly endless list of products that range from candies and kitchen equipment to bicycles. The name of Bohan is found on sheets, and that of Saint Laurent on shower curtains; Givenchy's name is on sunglasses, and Balmain's name on wigs. In several cases, the name on which all the couture profits pivot is only a name. The house of Chanel, who died in 1971, is kept going, in a harmless but rather creepy fashion (the journalists' sole criterion is whether "Mademoiselle" would have approved of the tiny departures her assistants make from her basically unchanging suits), because the financial house that owns Chanel perfumes deems a semblance of vitality useful. The case of Dior is even odder, because Christian Dior has been dead since 1957. Marc Bohan has designed the couture collections at Dior for nearly fifteen years, but it is Dior's name that still appears on some seventy products, from lipsticks, luggage, and lingerie to scarves, shoes, and shaving lotion. Few, if any, of the couturiers are independent, or even substantially in charge of their houses' purse strings. The perfume side of the Dior empire is owned by Moët-Hennessy; the perfume side of Saint Laurent is owned (so was his fashion, briefly) at one remove by Squibb. L'Oréal owns half of Courrèges, Baron Bich (of Bic pens) owns Guy Laroche and—by a wrinkle peculiarly French—the backing for the couture house of Jacques Esterel comes from a Communist millionaire. The exports for the couture empires of such companies are rising by leaps and bounds, helped rather than otherwise by financial insecurity in the world, which seems to make the rich richer and to make the nouveaux riches—whether on Fifth Avenue, the Ginza, or the Faubourg Saint-Honoré, or in the Arab countries, West Germany, or South America—more in need of the reassurance of their wealth and taste that they believe they find in a little label with a big French name.

ONE can't help admiring the transformation of an ancient craft industry that, unaided, would almost certainly have died. By subjecting the couture to rational business methods and developing its potential in an abstract management-consultant fashion, its backers have pulled off a triumph of what the modern-minded French like to call *le marketing*. But it is a characteristic of the most skillful kind of modern marketing—whether of an industry, a product, a policy, or a politician—to enlist "the media" as its more or less conscious publicity arm. The world's fashion press, whenever it prates on about the divine new tendencies in a couture collection, is simply serving up propaganda for a group of successful international corporations.



The French fashion press, at least, has a direct sentiment of commercial chauvinism to justify its attentions to the haute couture; still, the alliance produces some curious and paradoxical effects. All journalists in France, even those concerned with fashion, tend to think of themselves as political creatures, allied with the left wing, the right wing, or—more commonly—some fraction, subdivision, or splinter of a wing. In France, both Socialism and Communism are part of established society in such a significant way that it would be unthinkable for them not to be present at the collections of the haute couture—another important part of established society. Two boutiques in the old working-class quarter of Paris around the now demolished Les Halles—a neighborhood that, like SoHo, houses a community of earnestly tasteful young people, with

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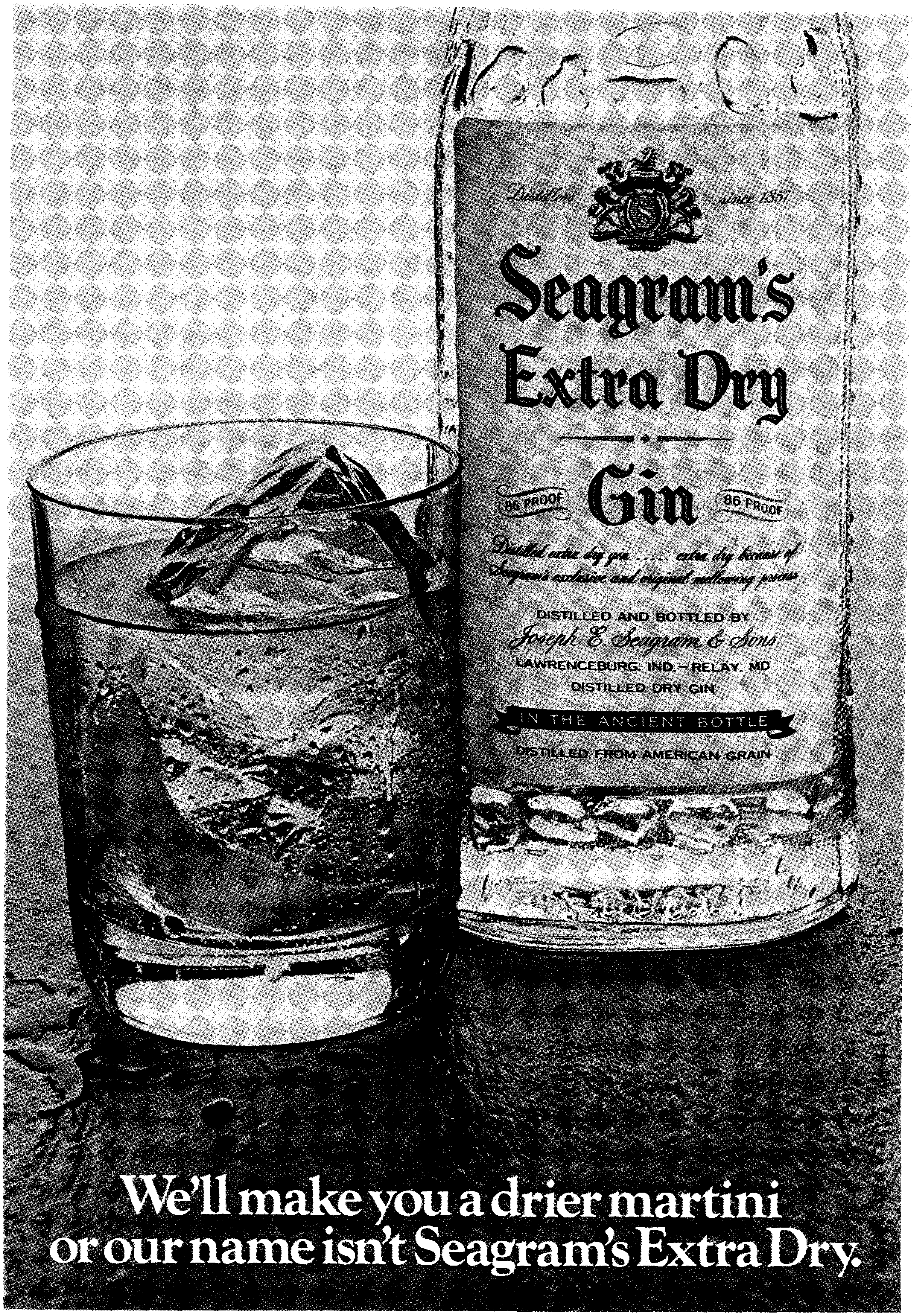
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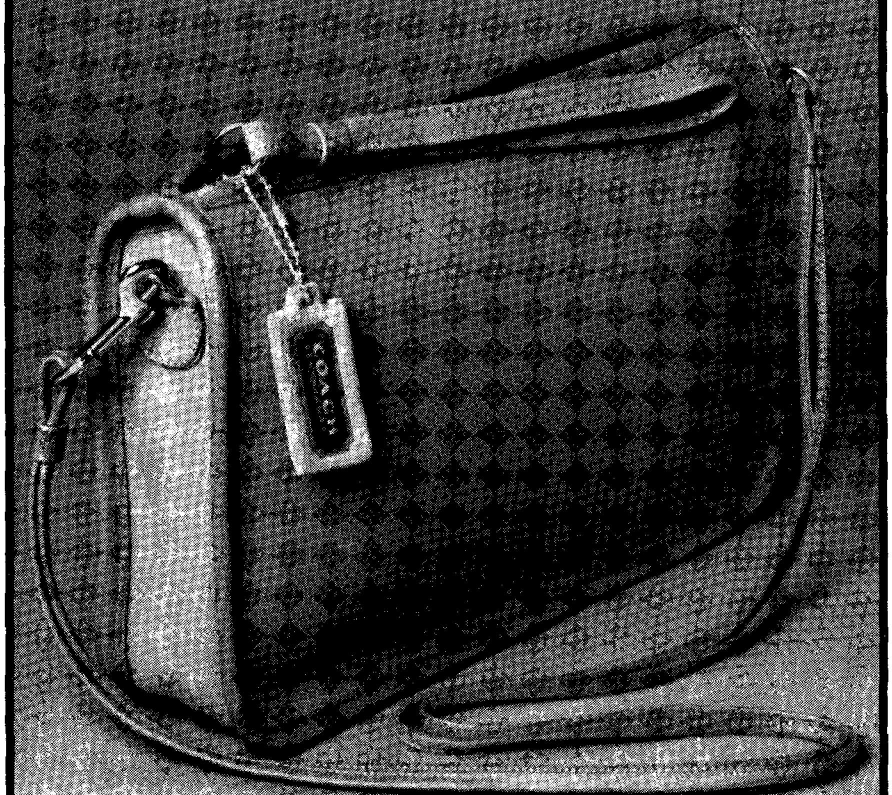
the same international libraries of picture books on Garbo, the American Indian, and the Pre-Raphaelites—furnish what, together with clothes from the flea market, has become the uniform of Parisians who are both fashion-conscious and committedly left-wing. The shop called La Maison Bleue was founded by an intense young man with a Ph.D. in sociology who thought that his shapeless flannel flour-sack designs would be just the thing for "The People." (Except that the clothes proved quite expensive, and "The People" turn out to have a stubborn loyalty to such unreformed fashions as miniskirts and double-knit pants suits.) Globe, a neighboring shop, is an even more unremittingly ideological spot with a few bleak gray metal filing cabinets in an aircraft-hangar décor, and a few dismal piles of secondhand Army-surplus clothes—British desert shorts, Foreign Legion jodhpurs, Balaclava helmets, and Vietcong pajamas—that are carried off by the most attractive young fashion journalists and model girls in Paris. And in the magnificent rococo or Second Empire salons where the collections of the haute couture are unveiled one sees an incongruous parade of the more cerebral French fashion journalists, clothed by Globe or La Maison Bleue, with Moscow-street-cleaner kerchiefs over orphanage-style pudding-basin haircuts, wending their way to a spindly bamboo-turned gilt chair and an honored place in the couturier's front row. Here they may come across a photographer from the Communist daily press, making sure of a good shot of the latest examples of haute-couture evening gowns, one of which still costs—as it did in 1900—about the equivalent of a year's salary for the seamstress who made it. But whenever left-wing French fashion journalists show signs of chafing at their support of a capitalism that allows a handful of rich women to spend more than the price of a family car on a single dress, they are firmly reminded by couture interests that the system they are thinking of tearing down supports fifty thousand French workers. And whenever supporters of the Giscard Administration voice doubts about covering couture shows as if they were news, officialdom draws attention to the splendid effect of the couture empire on France's balance of payments.

THE idea of independence never got much of a foothold in fashion journalism in any country. Reporters of fashion "events" share with motor-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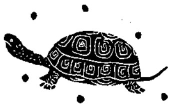
ing critics and State Department correspondents the humiliating need to depend on those they write about for information that is never—unlike books, plays, or news—to enter into the public domain. Most newcomers to these semi-private fields of reporting grasp the conventions so rapidly that authority rarely sees the need to remind its dependents of the unpleasant consequences of a withdrawal of such privileges as access to a test model, a background briefing, or a good seat at a fashion show specially mounted for the fashion press. (Some years ago, when an American fashion columnist felt stirred up enough—and powerful enough—to describe one couturier's collection as "frankly ugly," he made her pay penance for her unprecedented and unrepeated moment of rebellion by not inviting her to his shows for several seasons.) Like other industries and governments, the fashion industry knows how to bind reporters closer with a few judiciously placed confidences, and it fosters dependence on press releases. The usual justification for such releases is that they are an aid to reporters who must insure that rivals do not beat them to a deadline with the story of a unique event. But this excuse seems foolish when the reporting is of couture shows, for an opinion about the couturier's "new ideas" is mutually arrived at by the journalists present, often with the friendly help of the couturier, and the clothes on display will not be worn until six months later, anyway.



Like any other social or professional group—although perhaps rather more slowly, because all the powerful branches of the fashion industry, even when they are vociferously bent on a show of novelty, are fundamentally conservative—the fashion press is being gradually transformed from within. It is debatable, though, whether it can change significantly before it simply peters out. The whole idea of "women's news," dealing with subjects beyond the ken of men, has been under serious challenge for several years. And as opportunities develop for women in careers outside the traditionally "feminine" and "intuitive" fields such as retailing, fashion, public relations, and journalism, recruitment to fashion journalism must fall off. This independence gives women new possibilities in work and more confidence in their own taste, so the job of fashion adviser and the need for fashion advice must decline together. That the Paris couture, which is no longer synonymous with originality, quality, or artistic integrity, retains any prestige at all a tribute to the still vibrating wave of the energy generated in the nineteen-fifties and sixties by a generation of ambitious and aggressive women—often English or American—fo whom, when they embarked on thei careers, fashion was one of the few possible openings and Paris and th continent of Europe were still exotic relatively untrammelled territory. Th modern, promotion-based couture industry has its origins less in artistr than in a classic exercise in the carving out of a kingdom of power by the relatively powerless—women journalists and homosexua designers. A younger generation of women, less interested in power or interested in new varieties of power, is less willing to spend long, often poorly paid years in apprenticeship as they wait to join the "editors" in front-row seats at the pompous rites of fashion shows. Those younger women who do break into the circle seem not as eager as their seniors to spin outrageous tales about how designers' "novelties" are greeted with "ovations," and their reports are not as likely to be distorted by the urge to possess expensive clothes. In time, this may have an effect on the widespread convention among fashion reporters that they should get the clothes they publicize, if not for nothing, at least at far lower prices than those paid by readers who take their advice.

Fashion reporters are beginning to pay at least lip service to the theory that they ought to be allowed to function at fashion shows as theatre critics do at first nights. This principle of free speech has no support of any consequence among designers, most of whom offer their collections to the press not for judgment but for approval, and who see themselves as hosts of private parties to which they graciously invite a few loyal friends. Criticism by guests is not called for; the only possible reaction is wild enthusiasm or merciful silence. Even if objectivity were tolerated or encouraged, it is not at all certain that the fashion writers would know how to exercise the prerogative. There have been so many years of trotting off, lemminglike, to Paris, to play a well-defined part in the ceremony of whipping up group enthusiasm in order to return and whip up more enthusiasm in a bigger group—the readers at home. Hints of critical opinion *have* surfaced in fashion reports of late, but the tendency is to apply it only to the weak or the far-distant, while continuing to accord automatic admiration and sympathy to the most powerful designers of the hour and to advertisers at home.

Still, even a minute, inadequate rebellion makes a useful dent in the theory—apparently so widely adhered to by manufacturers—that fashion is a variety of religious faith, a worldwide web of mindless enthusiasm, and that if any part of the whole is damaged by scrutiny the structure will collapse completely and women will give up buying any clothes at all. This fear of individual opinion is like that of a hidebound cardinal halting debate on a trivial point of doctrine lest it lead to questioning the existence of God. In fact, like all outmoded authorities and discredited creeds, the haute-couture variety of fashion is well on the way to destroying itself. Autocratic fashion systems adopted by slavish followers are no longer the source of real fashion. Most women now want a fashion that reflects them—and there are enough varieties of women to keep a thousand national garment industries afloat without the aid of abject publicists. Slavish women still exist, of course, and there are still those who swallow whole each of the series of latest "looks" the fashion magazines come up with, but few sensible women envy these walking mannequins or seek to copy them. Even those who go in for the complete anti-fashion pattern of denim or Army-surplus look pathetically robotlike; they are a sadder lot than those who dress up in expensive packages of status symbols, because the rebels put more thought into their choice and a higher level of self-deception is involved. The time is past for the fashion that comes tied in neat, biannual bundles, trailing coördinated accessories and enthusiastic adjectives, and for the commercial ballyhoo about big looks replacing little looks and bringing new personalities to "every woman." All this nonsense only clutters up our lives unnecessarily and unsettles women by suggesting that something is going on in fashion that the initiates know about but that is beyond an amateur's comprehension; and the simple, personal pleasures of dress—for drama, comfort, flirtation, as a cure for gloom, or out of peacock vanity—are thereby robbed of their inestimable worth.

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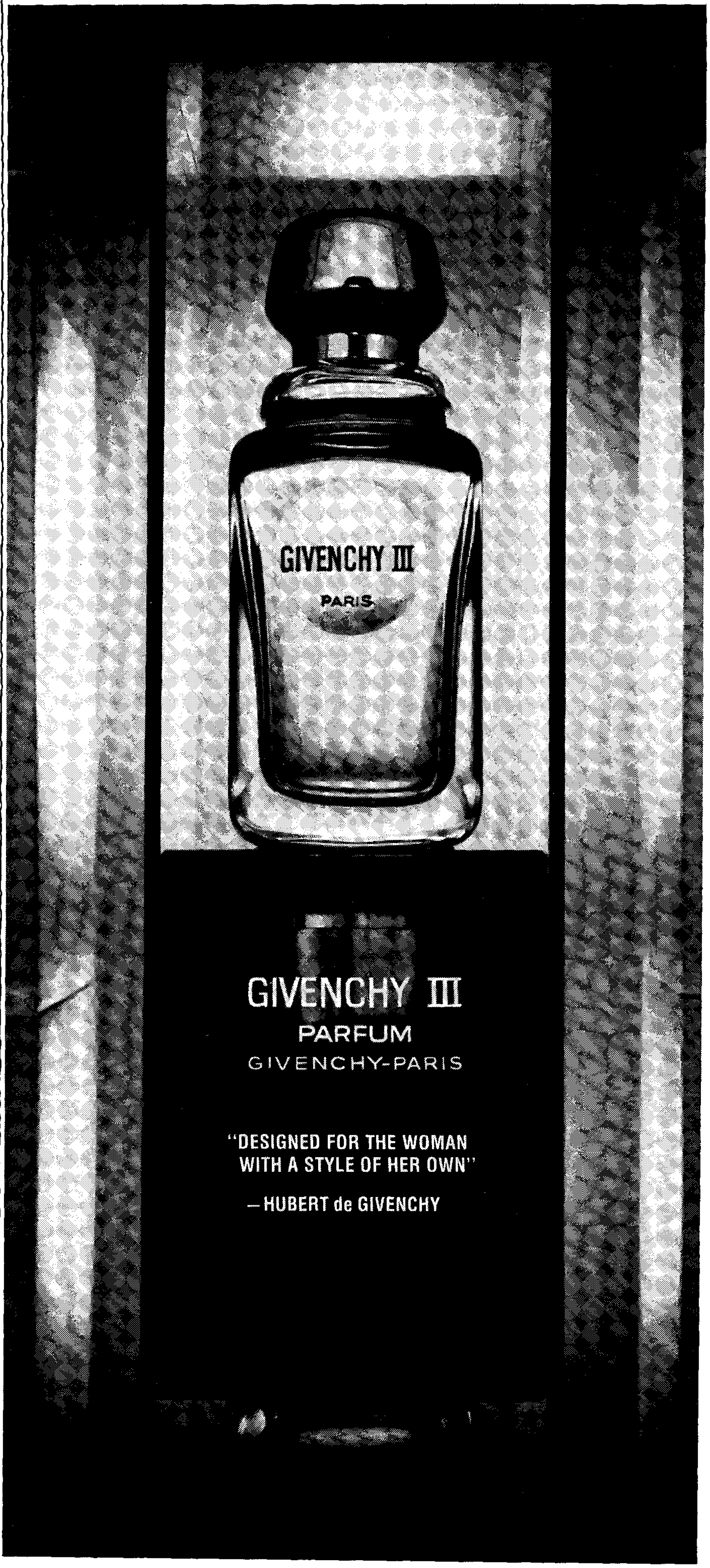

A REPORTER AT LARGE

JOURNEY TO NORTH VIETNAM

Hanoi, the city that obsessed the Pentagon for a decade, the city whose image haunted Lyndon Johnson at three in the morning and suffused the politics of the sixties, does not look impressive. It is a provincial French town, now slightly ill-kempt. When I was there recently, North Vietnamese troops had made the first attack in what was to become the final offensive of the war. But Hanoi itself gave few clues to this effort—this prodigious war effort over a decade. There were no signs of war in the city: no alerts, no troop movements, and no anti-aircraft guns. More than that, though, the city seemed half lethargic, tropical. Having lived in Saigon, I found Hanoi familiar—sometimes crazily so. The Hotel Thong Nhat, or Reunification, where I stayed, is the double of the old Continental Hotel in Saigon. It has the same yellow, high-ceilinged rooms, the same overhead fans, the same huge bathtubs scrubbed far beyond their enamel, and the same window vents onto the corridors that in the early morning transmit the same animated cacophony of Vietnamese voices and laughter. Across the ancient French telephone wires, the voice of Mr. Long, the interpreter for the Committee of Solidarity with the American People, which had invited me and three American companions to North Vietnam, sounded exactly like that of my old friend from the Washington *Post* staff, the interpreter Vu Thuy Hoang. There was the same edge of nerves, the same sudden blockages of English. Both interpreters are, as it happens, sensitive, slightly pedantic men, who must each morning weigh the horror of disturbing you against the horror of failure to keep to the schedule. The Thong Nhat is the Continental inhabited by its antimatter, its necessary complement. Instead of the *Newsweek* bureau, there is the office of Tass; where the *Le Monde* correspondent lived is the room of the *L'Humanité* reporter. Graham Greene knows one hotel, Felix Greene the other. Indian and Polish diplomats inhabit rooms in both hotels, but in the restaurant of the Thong Nhat the men with sports shirts outside their pants, drinking beer, are not Filipinos but Mongolians. Having come by Aeroflot or Interflug instead of by Air France or Pan Am, they participate in a continental system that is quite self-sufficient, and impervious to the other one. The division of the world is nowhere keener than it is in Vietnam.

"It says, 'I'm smart, yes, but not trendy.'"

Of course, in the Thong Nhat there is no parallel to the Continental Shelf—that terrace bar, with its potted palms and its derelict atmosphere, where after five the G.I.s on passes and the construction men showed up to drink gin-and-tonics and to dispute with the whores, the street sellers, and the transvestites. The restaurant and the bar of the Thong Nhat are large, rather gloomy rooms, little patronized by either the Vietnamese or many of the foreigners, who prefer their own rooms, where at least they do not feel quite so foreign. There is no Cuong in Hanoi—Cuong the newspaper seller, the hysterical child who clung passionately to the arms of American journalists and swore perfectly in American. The sidewalk outside the Thong Nhat is empty of children except just after school hours, in the late afternoon, when groups of little boys wearing the red neckerchiefs of the Young Pioneers stop for a minute to gaze at the foreigners. The boys stand at a discreet distance, but occasionally they will consent to talk. They will tell you—if you speak Vietnamese—that they want to grow up to be pilots, and they will recite the numbers and dates of American aircraft shot down over Hanoi with all the precision of American children reciting baseball scores.

At that hour of the evening, the streets around the hotel are filled with walkers and bicyclists—the faint sounds of their passage broken now and then by the roar of a truck or a Russian jeep. In the rainy season, men and women wear green military jackets, pith helmets, and scarves; they look busy and purposeful. To a foreigner newly arrived, this monochrome procession might well give the impression

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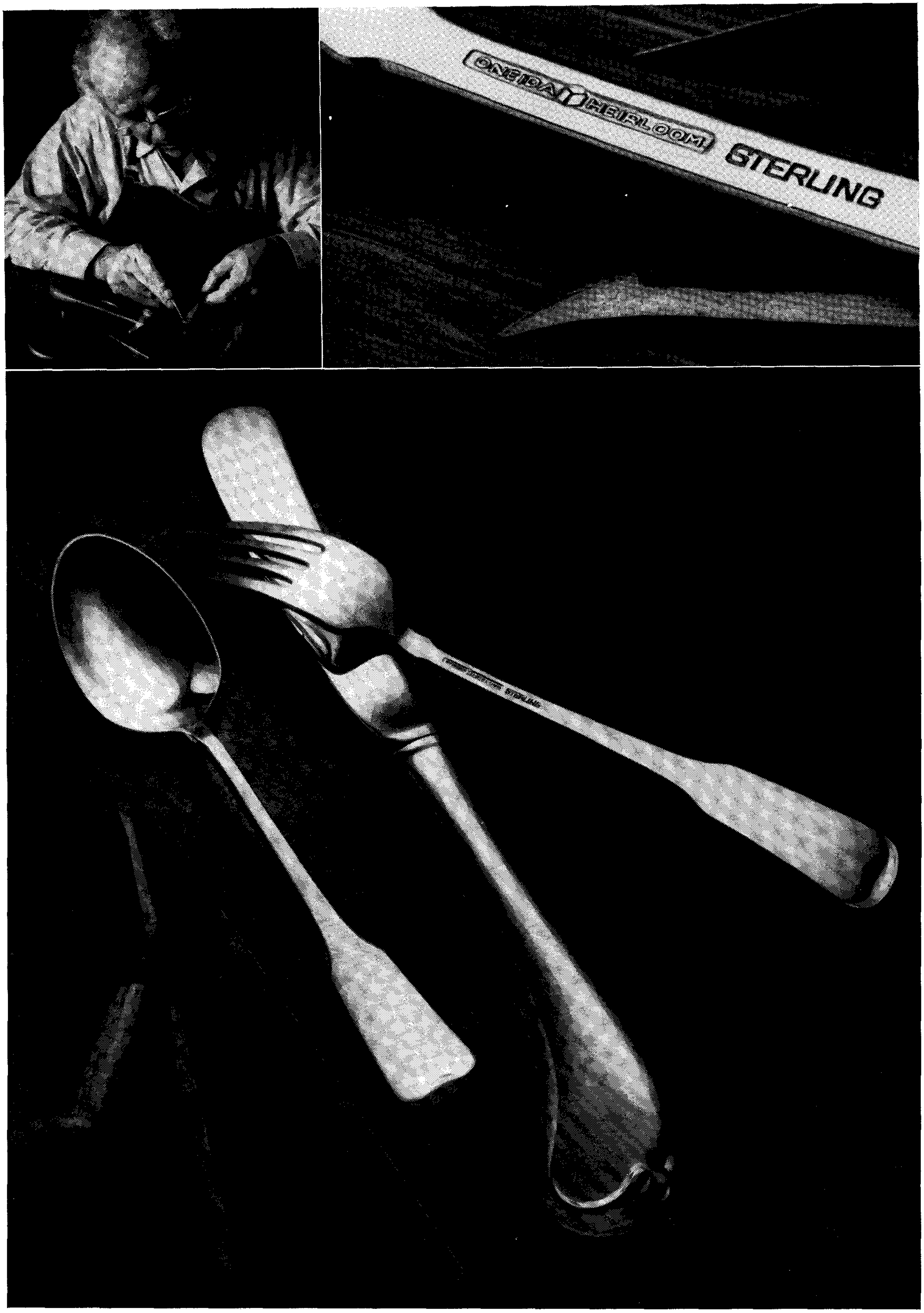
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of a society that is uniform, closed, and terrifyingly disciplined. But that depends on where you come from. While I was there, a Spaniard—an old-line Spanish Republican—arrived from China, where he had been teaching his nearly impenetrable brand of provincial Spanish at the University of Peking for eleven years. Standing in the cold lobby of the Thong Nhat, he exclaimed over and over, "It's too much for me—all the people, all the life of this place! It's chaotic, overwhelming. Everyone's talking all the time. It's total disorder." His reaction seemed laughable in that lobby, but, as we Americans came shortly to see, it was more or less the truth of the matter.

After all these years of war, Hanoi remains a lively, disorderly place that bears little relation to any city of mainland China. It is so even on the surface. You have, for instance, only to try crossing the street to discover that the bicyclists of Hanoi have as little faith in the rules and as much in their own prowess as the Honda drivers of Saigon. The streets, to be sure, are cleaner than those in Saigon, but they are still not strikingly clean. Most of the buildings, including the government buildings, could do with a new coat of paint or stucco, and the whole city has a relaxed, slightly dilapidated look. At the Bach Mai Hospital, workmen have rebuilt a number of the pavilions destroyed by bombing, and the new wards are beginning to look as long-used as the older ones. When we arrived, the doors to the operating theatre were open, and medical students in stained white coveralls were wandering in to look at an operation in progress.

SPICED PEARS
SOUR CHERRIES
SOUR CHERRI
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A city is no better organized than its commerce, and while Hanoi has state stores and a rationing system, there is also a good deal of private enterprise of the traditional variety. In the old Chinese quarter, the streets are lined with private shops, and in the alleys women from the countryside sit cross-legged amid their baskets of bright lettuces, carrots, and onions. In that district, there are a few small cafés, and a few family-run restaurants that serve Chinese food and *pho*, the excellent North Vietnamese noodle soup. There is also a covered market with stalls selling tropical fish, musical instruments, and elegant straw baskets. Some of the women who call out to you from these stalls are former prostitutes who were rehabilitated by the government after the French Army evacuated the city, twenty years ago. Prostitution is illegal now, and you don't see streetwalkers, but the profession has not been eliminated—any more than the black market has. It exists, discreetly, for Vietnamese soldiers far from home.

After ten years of war and twenty years of a revolutionary government, Hanoi still has some atmosphere of Europe. Of course, most of the city was built during the colonial period. The leisurely charm of its grand stucco villas, its lakes, and its tree-lined streets is an anachronism—surely not a reflection of its present character. And yet the Vietnamese have grown to like this architecture of the past—to the point where they consider restoring some of the buildings bombed beyond use instead of designing something new. Then, too, they have kept up many of the old customs. In the afternoons, Hanoians drink beer on the terrace of the little restaurant next to the lake; they rent rowing shells or go for a ride in the motorboats that putter back and forth between its islands. On holidays or formal occasions, men and women tend to dress more in the European style: the men wear suits and ties, the women makeup and more colorful blouses. On Christmas Eve, thousands of young people come into the center of the city to listen to open-air concerts and to wander through the streets around the cathedral in groups, eying each other and giggling. This *paseo* is also the custom in Saigon. And, as in Saigon, young people tend to go about in groups of their own sex; couples don't walk around in public holding hands. Still, most evenings, in the small, dark park near the lake, each bench will contain two forms and will have two bicycles crossed in front of it, like amorous skeletons. The police bother the lovers no more than they bother the little boys who illegally fish in the lake with homemade spinning rods.

In Hanoi, it is initially more, rather than less, difficult to understand how the North Vietnamese have succeeded in this ten-year-old war. In the first place, North Vietnam is far from being "the Prussia of the Orient," as General William Westmoreland has called it. The soldiers walking through the streets look like civilians in uniforms—rather old uniforms, at that, and often in bizarre combination with rubber sandals or civilian shoes. According to Western diplomats who have seen them parade, their marching is almost laughable. As for the police, they have trouble with such simple things as directing traffic and containing crowds. In the opinion of a Westerner who was in Hanoi during Christmas of 1972, the bombing of the Kham Thien housing district claimed more casualties than it should have, because the police were unable to keep people from slipping back into town to visit their families, in disregard of evacuation orders. On the whole, the North Vietnamese seem to have as casual an attitude toward small regulations as they have toward building maintenance. The officials, of course, do not approve of this attitude. The insouciance embarrasses them, for it speaks of underdevelopment—of a type of mind that cannot grasp the connection between the details and the whole of a complicated organization. They would like the police to be more efficient; they would like the rules observed. Still, the leaders are guerrillas by training, and without the experience of artificial, drill-field discipline. They are not Prussians, and they are not Chinese, either. In Hanoi, a mass campaign to, say, kill all flies in the city with flyswatters would be inconceivable. To the North Vietnamese officials, such events in China appear quite as exotic as they do to Westerners. When I asked one economist what models the Chinese revolution might provide for Vietnam, the man stared at me for a few moments, his eyes wide with disbelief, and then said, "Well, what would *you* suggest? The Cultural Revolution? People's Communes? The local manufacture of pig iron?" George Meany could hardly have been more surprised by the question. And yet the economist had spent two or three years studying in China.

It is perhaps a relative matter, this question of discipline versus spontaneity, of Chinese versus European culture. Certainly for an American in North Vietnam, there is no getting over a feeling of foreignness—in addition to the slight claustrophobia that comes from being the guest of a government and seeing only what officials take one to see. And it is true that the Hanoians have rigidities that the Saigonese lack. As foreign visitors have often written, there is a certain ceremony to all interviews: there are always tea, fruit, and cigarettes laid out on a long table, there are speeches of welcome and inquiries after one's health, and if the visit is to an organization one or more

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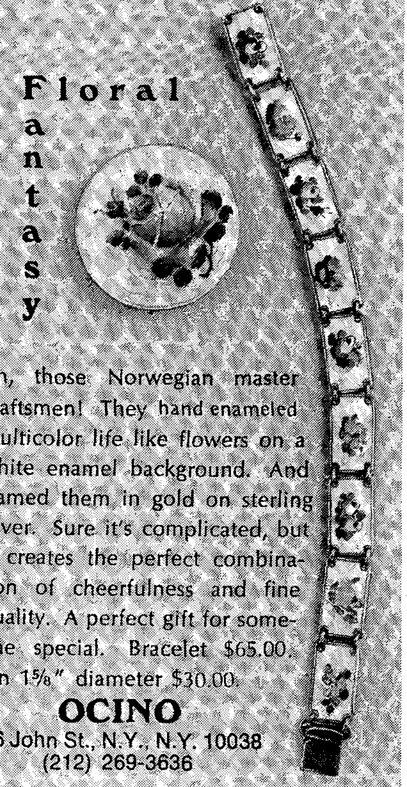

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women will inevitably be brought in to sing patriotic songs. If the visitors have not been to China, they are always surprised by how wide the sphere of politics is in North Vietnam and how little the people seem to use all the other resources of their language. They are also frequently dismayed at the difficulty of getting North Vietnamese to talk about themselves. Some visitors—usually those on their first trip to Asia—have therefore concluded that the North Vietnamese are fanatically doctrinaire or personally one-dimensional, the social persona having eclipsed the individual. But a good part of the problem is simply that of strangeness, of not knowing quite where to look to find the person—and that works both ways. In Thai Binh Province, the manager of a silk-processing factory turned up to greet my companions and me in a three-piece Western suit with a gold watch chain. His dress prompted a rather tactless question from one of us about whether factory managers do manual labor or consider themselves "officials" and thus above such things. The man was completely crestfallen. "But I wore this suit just in order to receive you," he said. Since he had not seen many—if any—Americans before, he was probably offended because we were wearing bluejeans, but he was too polite to say so.

To become attuned to such niceties is to discover that North Vietnamese formality has no implacable quality to it—that it is in many respects façade. After all these years of isolation, the Northerners have, for instance, a tremendous curiosity about foreigners, which they ill conceal behind pride and a desire to be polite. Once, when we were changing a tire on a deserted road, two trucks pulled up alongside our car; their drivers got out, opened the hoods of the trucks, and went through an elaborate pantomime of fixing the engines while all the time staring goggle-eyed at us. A few days later, I went with my three American companions—two scholars of Vietnamese history and a peace activist who knows a great deal about Vietnam—to talk with the faculty and students at the Southeast Asia Institute. The meeting was very informal, and full of good-humored argument in English, French, and Vietnamese. At one point during the discussion, one of my companions gave a detailed analysis, in French, of American congression politics in regard to the supplement bill on military aid to Saigon. A middle-aged, rather strong-boned woma took up the job of translating it int Vietnamese, doing it with liveliness an an obvious comprehension of the subject. The woman, I discovered late was the wife of General Vo Nguye Giap.

There is the same superficial qualit to North Vietnamese propaganda—propaganda, that is, not ideology. Th first interview of our visit was with a official from the Ministr of Information, who, without regard for any of ou questions, proceeded, lik some ideological freigh train, over all the old tracks, from the independence of North Vietnamese policy to American imperialism in the South. I feared the worst until I noticed that by the second hour all our hosts, the members of the Committee for Solidarity, either had left the room or were surreptitiously writing notes on some other subject to themselves. Later, in Thanh Hoa Province, we listened to a young woman, the head of a district militia team, describe two of the battles for Ham Rong Bridge—one of the ten most important targets in the North for American bombers. Her stories had clearly been told many, many times, for they were all artifice, from the set-piece narratives to the nuggetlike encomiums to the courage and virtue of the fighters. Hearing them was like hearing a Norse saga in the making. The young woman spoke in classically accented Vietnamese. Long-haired, slim, her chin raised high, she herself looked like some mythological heroine or goddess of war. Quite clearly, she was a performer, and her job was to create a heroic tradition among the peasantry. But our city-born Vietnamese guides did not understand that. After she had gone, one of them screwed up his face, laughed, and said, "I'd never marry a woman like that! She's terrifying!"

There is in the North Vietnamese an undercurrent of irony that is completely subversive to high-flown rhetoric and doctrinaire rigidity. Of course, the Vietnamese have their share of bores, but the propaganda lectures we heard came only from the lower-level cadres—from people who were unsure of themselves with us. And even they would tend to drop these verbal defenses when we asked the right questions—when we ourselves moved away from abstraction to talk about the concrete. The higher up or the more sophisticated the official, the less rhetoric there would be. Pham Van Dong, the head of state, and Hoang Tung, the editor of *Nhan Dan*, the Party newspaper, used almost none; on the contrary, they tended to simplify, to personalize, to bring global abstractions down to the level of everyday speech. Their simplicity was not, of course, without artifice, and it did not imply a lack of ideology. It was the style that they had inherited from Ho Chi Minh, that master performer, whose great strength lay in his ability to be disarming. North Vietnamese officials are, of course, fully conscious of what they are doing, and conscious that you know what they are doing—with the result that irony is always close to the surface and their conversation often has a playful quality. Hoang Tung, for instance, did not use the official euphemism "Liberation Forces" for the combination of Southern guerrillas and North Vietnamese troops in the South. When he referred to these forces, he stopped and said, "Some people call them 'the North Vietnamese,' some call them 'the Vietcong'—you can call them anything you like." By such verbal judo, he created a basic understanding and passed the whole problem of rhetoric over to us.

To a great extent, Ho Chi Minh's style still pervades North Vietnam. There is, for one thing, no cult of personality in the country. I saw only one monumental portrait of Ho Chi Minh in the streets of Hanoi—and that is perched rather incongruously on the top of the central bank. Pictures of the current leaders—Le Duan, the Party Secretary, and Premier Pham Van Dong—appear only in the newspapers. Perhaps because of the war, there are no large monuments to anything, and there are few propaganda banners or signs in the streets. The single most important propaganda message—indeed, almost the only one—is Ho Chi Minh's statement "There is nothing more precious than independence and freedom." But even that message does not seem to have become iconic. One of the members of the Committee for Solidarity, for instance, repeated the sentence in the context of a joke about her own unmarried state.

Quite possibly, those Americans who came to North Vietnam during the bombing did not see such a degree of spontaneity, for in situations of stress the reaction of the North Vietnamese is rather like that of the English: to clam up, to retreat behind their par-

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ticular version of the stiff upper lip. But when I was there, Hanoi was more or less on a peacetime footing, in spite of the war in the South. All but the siloed anti-aircraft emplacements had been dismantled, rebuilding had begun, and the Vietnamese seemed to have readjusted. According to two Rumanian students who have spent the past four years in North Vietnam, communication with the Vietnamese has been a good deal easier in the past year or so; their classmates would invite them to their homes now, and talk about their own lives. My companions and I did not have the same opportunity for informal contacts. Still, we could walk about Hanoi by ourselves and talk with people on the streets, and our hosts were easygoing about our schedule. They steered us away from military affairs (we met no high military officers, and, doubtless because of all the convoys on the roads, we did not travel south to Quang Tri), but apart from that there seemed to be no particular direction they preferred to have us take. We determined the subject matter we wanted to cover, if not the officials we wanted to see, and we initiated the discussions.

In nineteen days, we talked with a great number of officials, artists, and intellectuals; we visited two provinces, one in the Red River Delta, the other further down the coast; and we went to the circus, to films, and to the *cheo*, the traditional folk opera. Among the people we met, four or five were of particular interest to me. One of them was Tran Phuong, the director of the Institute for Economics and the vice-director of the important Committee for Social Science. Crewcut, rather blunt of speech, Tran Phuong spent some six hours answering our questions about the economic problems of North Vietnam and the plans for future development. Though he is an intellectual and quite probably a government theoretician, he spoke in the most concrete of terms. He was, he said, forty-eight years old. He had been a guerrilla leader in the Red River Delta during the French Indo-China war, and had become the underground head of a province at the age of twenty-one. After the war, taking advantage of a government program for academic study, he had spent some time in the Soviet Union and China. His approach to economics seemed to me entirely pragmatic. He was not, for instance, very much interested in speculating on ideological questions like the dilemma of "moral" versus "material" incentives. His presentation was matter-of-fact, unpolemical, and rather more lucid than that of most economists. Even on what I presumed were delicate subjects, such as Army pay and foreign aid, he showed no trace of defensiveness. What he talked about mostly was building factories, getting things done.

Another intellectual of interest was Dr. Nguyen Khac Vien, a man rather better known in the West than Tran Phuong. Having spent nearly twenty years of his life in Paris—mainly because of a chronic illness—Dr. Vien belongs to the French intellectual tradition: his Marxism is of the philosophical sort, his theoretical work elegant and literary. As an essayist and a historian, he has written by far the most scholarly and provocative work on the question of Confucianism and Marxism and the transformation of Vietnamese society. He has also translated the great early-nineteenth-century Vietnamese epic the "Kim Van Kieu" into French, and is now organizing the huge project of translating the major works of Vietnamese literature. He is one of those rare men, a translator between two cultures.

In Thai Binh Province, in the eastern part of the Red River Delta, we spent a good deal of time with Dao Ngoc Che, whose title was Standing Member of the Provincial Committee. He was a Party member, and probably the No. 1 or No. 2 man in the province. Like Tran Phuong, he was down-to-earth and extremely informative—in this case, concerning agricultural policy and the history of the province. What interested me about him was that his career—to the extent that he outlined it for us—was fairly typical of those men who joined the Communist Party before the French war and who are now running the ministries and provinces of the country. Mr. Che is a compact, rather good-looking man in his mid-fifties. He was born in Thai Binh Province. When he was a schoolboy, at the time of the Popular Front government in France (1935-37), he started reading Vietnamese nationalist literature, which was becoming available for the first time as a result of political liberalization in the colony. He discussed politics with his friends, and when word of his interest spread he began to receive copies of the underground newspaper of the Indo-Chinese Communist Party. His first political impulses, he said, were purely anti-colonial. But when he began to consider how to get rid of the French—to consider the failure of the earlier nationalist movements—he found the analysis made by the Communists more and more convincing. He joined a Communist youth group and met a number of young Marxist intellectuals, whom he admired for their clarity of expression and their dedication. One man he was particularly close to, a university graduate, was arrested by the French and, under sentence of death, committed suicide in prison. Che joined the Party in 1938, and around the same time he became a teacher in a village school. In 1943, the French ordered his arrest, but he escaped and went underground, surfacing two years later, after the Japanese coup against the Vichy French administration in Hanoi. Those two years coincided with the great famine in North Vietnam created by Japanese agricultural policies; in Thai Binh Province, two hundred and eighty thousand people out of the total population of a million died of starvation. It was not, Che said, very difficult for him and his companions to organize the province for the uprising led by Ho Chi Minh in August of 1945.

We did not meet many younger people—one reason being that the leadership at all levels tends to come from the generation that fought the French Indo-China war. The only young woman I talked with at any length was Lien, a twenty-four-year-old university student who worked part time for the Committee for Solidarity. Lien is half child, half mature woman, and one of the least self-conscious people I've ever met. Tiny and beautiful, she wore the same loose black pants and khaki jacket every day, with a different scarf at the throat. Her English was not fluent, but she loved to make jokes in it, usually at her own expense. And she would sing in a high, pretty voice. She preferred romantic to patriotic songs, though she was an *enfant sage*. Lien's mother and father are factory workers in Hanoi, and she grew up in the city until she was fourteen, in 1965, when her whole high-school class was evacuated to a small, poor village in the countryside. Lien learned how to carry water and harvest rice as well as any peasant. She was, she said, stronger than she looked. During the years of the bombing, she and her friends walked or bicycled many miles on weekends to visit their families in the city or at other evacuation sites. Once, as we were driving into Hanoi, Lien said that she remembered the stretch

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of road we were on. She had walked home over it one night with a classmate. Because they had had an argument, he was walking on ahead, but not so far ahead that he could not help guide her in the darkness. He stepped on an unexploded mine, and his body scattered all over the road. In spite of such experiences, Lien seemed to have no emotional scars from the war—unless they were deeply hidden. A good student, a responsible girl, she was waiting to marry a young man doing his military service on the Chinese border.

The highest-level conversations of substance that our group had were with Hoang Tung, the editor of *Nhan Dan* and an alternate member of the Central Committee. Hoang Tung must be in his early sixties—or so I calculated, for he said that Le Duc Tho, who is sixty-five, was a childhood friend of his and one of his first contacts with the Communist Party, during the mid-thirties. Hoang Tung was one of the organizers of the August revolution in Hanoi in 1945, and since 1949 he has been the editor of the Party newspaper. His movements were brusque and youthful, but there was an air of fragility about him: he seemed to suffer from the damp chill of Hanoi. Like an announcer I saw on the new television station in Hanoi, he would sometimes wear an overcoat and scarf indoors, for there was no heat in his office. He had an expressive face, and an even more expressive manner. When an analysis demanded a certain level of abstraction, he would undercut the formality with a pixieish expression or an intense, rather personal gaze at one of us. He played at being surprised at his own jokes, the way old men sometimes do. He talked tough occasionally, but never in the ironclad-military style of his *Nhan Dan* editorials. When he spoke of the history of the war, it was usually to convey the human scale of the whole enterprise: the sorrow of it, and the exhaustion and the difficulty that the leaders had undergone in making some of their decisions. He was obviously a student of Ho Chi Minh, and an excellent tactician.

Hoang Tung was a student of the United States as well. Though he did not speak English, he had obviously read or heard about a great deal of the American literature on the war. But his grasp of American politics was far more than bookish; he understood American culture well enough to have an intuitive sense of it—to be able to extrapolate from what he knew. He could, for instance, characterize as well as anyone the various and contradictory moods of the American public and Congress on Vietnam: the tiredness, the distraction, the feeling that Vietnam was not a good war, and the potential for angry reaction. He was fascinated by Henry Kissinger—"that doctor of philosophy who has lately been more inclined to espionage." It would have amused him to know that during the Paris negotiations Kissinger continually complained in private about how the North Vietnamese "misread" the United States. Hoang Tung told one story that suggested the contrary. During the negotiations, he said, Le Duc Tho had asked Kissinger whether he would not have some difficulty getting a bill for aid to North Vietnam through Congress, even though the accord promised it. "But you don't understand us at all!" Kissinger replied, and went on to explain that while the Administration often had difficulty in obtaining small sums for single programs (social-welfare programs were his example), Congress every year passed a huge Pentagon budget, and the Administration would have the authority to use some of that for aid to North Vietnam. In this case, however, Tho was right, and not only about Congress, because what Kissinger was proposing was actually illegal.

When I asked Hoang Tung what role he thought the Vietnam war had played in world history, he said he believed that it had helped to change the balance of forces in the world. "But," he added, "it is a rare case in history for a small country to face two such big forces for such a long struggle. The development of history does not follow the criterion of equal price, equal wage for the same effort." Later, when we were speaking about economic problems in the United States, he expressed sympathy for the five or six million Americans unemployed. "It's terrible," he said. "It's such a waste. Why, those people represent more productive capacity than we have in our entire country!" His reaction was sincere, I am sure, since if there is one thing that the North Vietnamese hate it is waste.

UNDERDEVELOPMENT in North Vietnam has been written about before, of course, but it is still a surprise to see how little developed the country is, and how close to its origins. In the countryside, much of the landscape would be familiar to a Vietnamese of the nineteen-twenties—or the seventeen-twenties. Driving along a secondary road in the Red River Delta, we saw a woman, her trousers rolled up to the thighs, treading down the steps of a paddle wheel to lift the water from one paddy field to the next. Near her was a family of water buffalo, and just behind were two rattan sails moving mysteriously above a river dike. To the right, bunched together on a small piece of high ground, were banana trees, jackfruit trees, and the straw roofs of half a dozen houses. Nothing in that scene seemed modern except the small paddy-field dikes, which were straighter than they would have been twenty years ago, and the rice, which was one of the "miracle" varieties.

In the village and district centers, there are now power lines and a few tractors. But the paved road that links the provincial capitals is no wider now than it was when the French built it. Where it passes through the crowded market towns, even its narrow shoulders are threatened by lettuces. Food is the main concern. Food dominates the road traffic—trucks that carry sugar and salt, water-buffalo carts hauling pigs, bicycles overloaded with sacks of grain. On the ferry into Nam Dinh—a barge pushed across the river by a blackened tugboat—we saw women with baskets of tangerines, lettuces, and radishes surround and shove their way through a small detachment of soldiers.

In most of Southeast Asia, the cities have sucked in the rural population and then turned around to recolonize the countryside with superhighways, gas stations, and movie theatres. In North Vietnam, it is the reverse: the countryside has come to invade the cities. In the provincial towns, thatch now competes with red roof tiling, the streets are muddy, and the largest buildings by far are the churches—the buildings that American pilots usually did not hit. In the industrial centers, workers grow vegetables in factory yards; they are now, finally, bringing the machinery back from caves and forests where it was hidden for eight years. The evacuations made country children out of their offspring and peasants out of their wives. Today, even the people of Hanoi dress much as the peasants do, and, after years of power shortages and blackouts, they live by country schedules.

As the look of the place suggests, North Vietnam is still agricultural, decentralized, and not very Socialist. Eighty per cent of the people live on the land, and there are only half a

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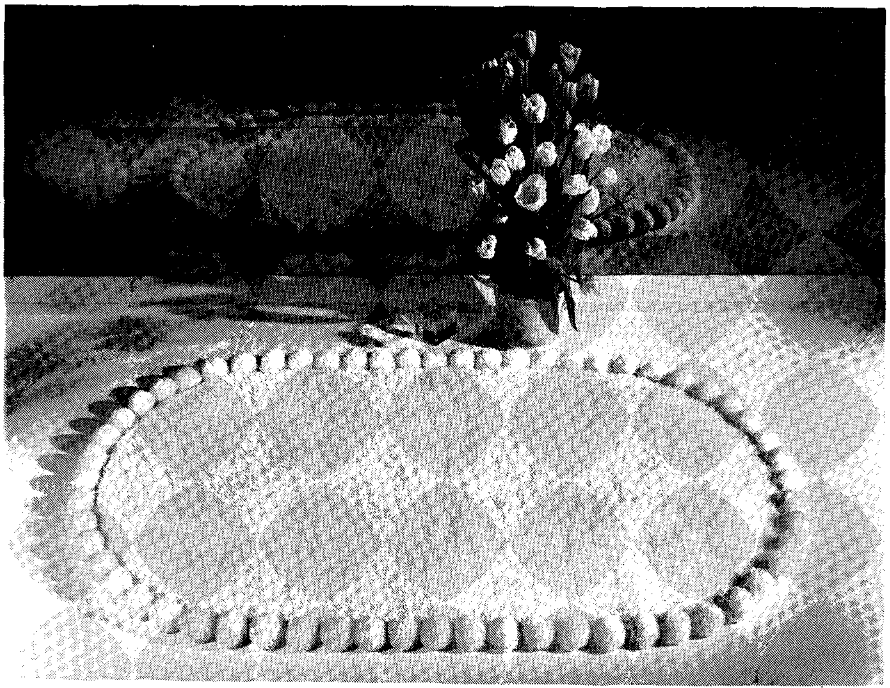

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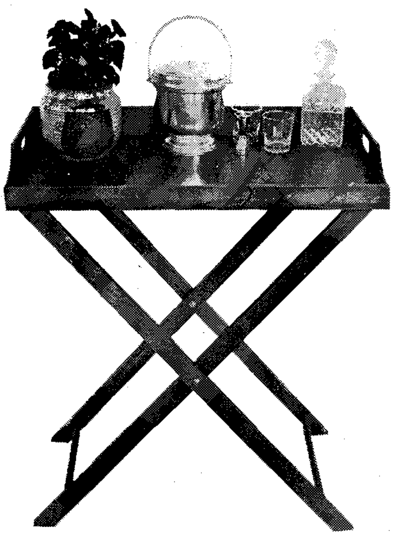

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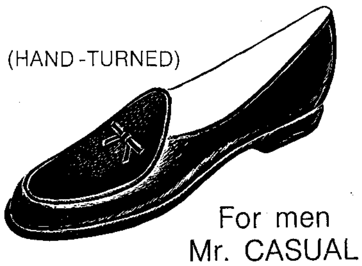

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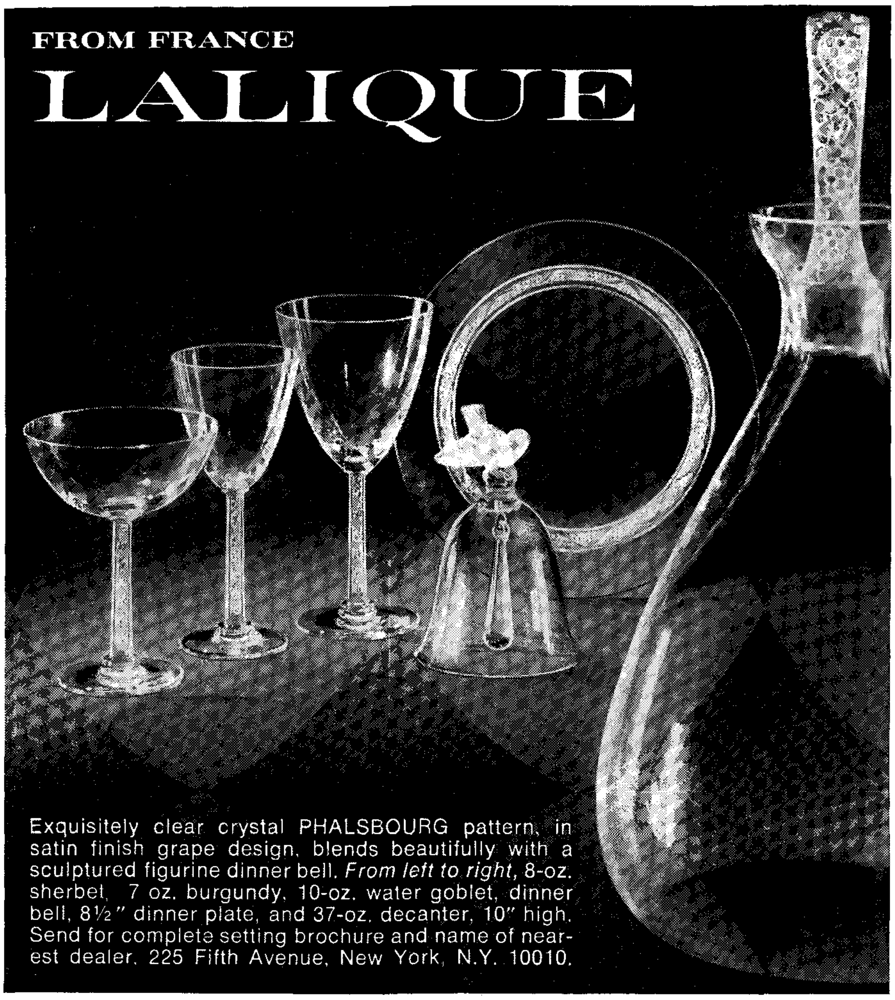
million industrial workers. This distribution is not surprising, for the economy had only ten years to develop between wars—ten years, in fact, out of half a century, since much of the small industrial plant built by the French dates back to the nineteen-twenties. Then the American bombing put out of action seventy per cent of the industry that North Vietnam possessed in 1965. What is more surprising is the extent to which the economic system of the North remains close to its roots in the traditional society of the region. Unlike China, North Vietnam never had large market cities. Its villages were almost self-sufficient, and almost independent of the state—dense nuclei of interconnected families in the rice-growing plains. These villages harbored the essential life of the country; having few needs and presenting no target, they made North Vietnam virtually invulnerable in times of invasion. The same is substantially true today, for the basic economic structure in North Vietnam is the agricultural coöperative—a unit about the size of the old village, which produces much of what it consumes. Self-sufficient and largely autonomous in economic matters, the coöperatives permitted the country to survive the destruction of its communications routes and most of its services.

On our trip, we visited two coöperatives—one in Thai Binh, the richest province of the Delta, and one farther south, in Thanh Hoa, not far from the Ham Rong Bridge. In both cases, the central hamlets were large clusters of wooden or mud-and-thatch houses surrounded by gardens and fruit trees, and the road, a secondary one, ended at a circle of low, whitewashed buildings that contained the administrative offices, the infirmary, and the schools. From there on, muddy lanes wound between the houses and along canals. Both co-ops had their own brick kilns, their own pig-breeding stations, and a number of handicraft industries. The local officials explained that the co-ops own the land they farm and its produce; civil law protects their title to the land and their rights vis-à-vis the state. As proprietors, the co-ops keep whatever percentage of the crop they need to feed their own members and sell the rest to the government. The sale involves a two-price system, the first price being a controlled base rate paid for an amount of rice that is fixed by quota, the second being a higher but floating market rate for whatever is produced above the quota. In return for the rice delivered at the base rate, the state furnishes the co-ops with agricultural machinery, fertilizer, and power at a subsidized price and comes to their relief in case of crop failure or other disaster. With money from its sales, the co-op pays its own expenses, makes capital investments, maintains a social-welfare fund, and pays its members according to the work each has contributed.

Each co-op, officials said, is run by an administrative board elected annually by, and from among, the co-op members. The functions of this board are purely economic—the state administers health care, education, justice, and so forth, through its village bureaucracy—but within that sphere its powers are extensive. It makes the decisions on what to plant, how to cultivate, and how to use its surplus funds—the scale of its payments to workers being set by law. The importance of these decisions is reflected in the widely varying results that different co-ops get from similar pieces of land. The administrative board negotiates the yearly quota with government authorities at district and provincial levels. The state, of course, has a good deal to say about the setting of the quotas: both district and provincial officials tend to be natives of their locality and to know what the co-op can produce. But since the government depends on the co-ops for rice and other products, the co-ops have their own source of bargaining power. "In a conflict, the co-op always wins," one economist said ruefully. This seems to have been true over the war years, in any case, for in that time the living standard of the peasants rose in relation to that of the workers and the government cadres.

In Thanh Hoa Province, we attended a meeting of the administrative board and the heads of the production teams of the Hoang Quy Co-op. In a room decorated with red banners and a picture of Ho Chi Minh, thirty men and five or six women were seated around a long table, drinking tea and passing around a bamboo water pipe, which contained the slightly narcotic tobacco of the North Vietnamese mountains. Men and women wore loose black pants, heavy jackets, and scarves. Most of the men were middle-aged, with horny hands, and faces carved deeply by the weather; the women were younger, and there were four or five young men who looked as if they might have been veterans of the current war. As had been arranged, the farmers paid no attention to our arrival but went on discussing the business before them—the question of transplanting spring rice seedlings. A man would raise his hand and call for recognition by the chairman. One man talked about the shortage of azolla—the water fern that the North Vietnamese have developed to replace chemical fertilizer. Another said that the women on his team would not work in cold weather unless they had enough heavy clothes and a supply of hot water to drink in the fields. A third said that by transferring so many people to the job of transplanting seedlings the co-op would risk falling behind in other tasks. The discussion went on for four hours. Everyone wanted to give an opinion, demanded to be heard. The men spoke loudly, and from time to time challenged or contradicted each other. "You say we could use some encouragement, some banners and songs," one told the information officer. "But that's your job, and last time you didn't have anything prepared." At one point, the chairman said that the tension of the meeting had given him a headache, and that it would be better to take a break with a few songs. A young woman then got up and sang a well-known patriotic tune; she was followed by an old farmer singing a strange, archaic-sounding melody from a classical opera. Then the meeting went on in the same animated fashion until, finally, a consensus emerged and a plan was worked out in detail. In spite of cold weather and the need to accomplish other tasks, the farmers would, they agreed, work extra hard to finish the transplanting soon.

Having asked to talk with a family, we were introduced to a middle-aged woman named Mrs. Thong. Her husband was a postal worker, who lived most of the time in town, the couple having separated informally. With three young children and a grandmother of eighty, Mrs. Thong lived in a low wooden house facing onto a tiny courtyard. Like most of the houses in the co-op, hers had an open front room containing a fourposter bed, a wooden table and chairs, and a heavy wooden loom. It also had a radio receiver that picked up the programs transmitted by the co-op headquarters, and a double septic tank at the back. Water had to be brought from a communal well nearby and boiled before it was drunk. An energetic and well-organized wom-



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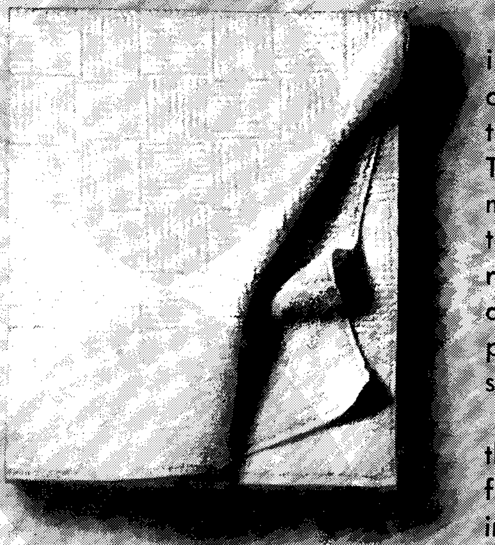

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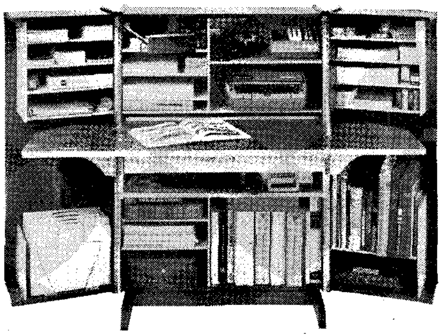

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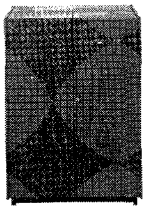

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an, Mrs. Thong supported the whole family herself. Her main work, she said, was with a rice-production team that farmed thirty-two hectares; she also made money weaving mosquito netting—the traditional handicraft of the village—with thread supplied by the coöperative. She was a top-grade worker, and so her income last year had been one and a fifth metric tons of rice and two hundred and fifty dong. Her rice ration, she said, was enough to feed her family for a year and have some left over for guests; with the money she could buy salt, kitchen utensils, fish sauce, and so forth, from the state store in the co-op. Mrs. Thong did not have to buy much food, however, for she raised poultry, kept a vegetable garden, and grew animal fodder on her private land. Over lunch—an excellent meal with five or six dishes of meat and vegetables—she told us that her children were all in school and that while she herself had never gone to school when she was young, she had attended a night school for the past three years and was now continuing on through the secondary level, because the co-op needed people with technical skills.

Mrs. Thong may be an exceptional woman in one of the more prosperous co-ops in the country. Still, it is not hard to believe that in many respects life is better for most North Vietnamese than it was for their parents. After all, from the nineteen-twenties on North Vietnam suffered one large-scale derangement after another: the Depression, the Second World War, the Japanese occupation, and the French Indo-China war. Now, at least, there is a government that provides a system of social security for all. The state guarantees a livelihood to the co-ops and the co-ops, in turn, provide for their members, including the sick, the orphaned, and the elderly. War veterans have special benefits; they are given job and education preference, and, if disabled, they are provided for by the state. There is a health-care system, beginning with the infirmaries in the villages and ending with the hospitals in the provincial towns and cities. While there are differences among the co-ops, particularly among those below the Twentieth Parallel, which have been constantly bombed, no one starves in North Vietnam. The rationing of such items as rice, meat, and cloth insures a fairly even distribution of the essentials. Education is compulsory to the age of fourteen and after that is open to all, including adults. According to government figures, there are now six and a half million students in the country.

THE North Vietnamese officials we met hardly mentioned their country's social achievements, and in conversation they treated them much as they did the bombing damage—as assumptions from which they had to proceed. What concerned them was future development and the state of the economy as it had emerged from the war. After the Paris agreement was signed, in 1973, the government of North Vietnam undertook a general review of the economy, analyzing the problems of structure as well as drawing up a balance sheet. Over the past year, Party leaders have discussed in public speeches a good many of their findings, and the picture they have presented has not been bright. According to the data thus far released, North Vietnam is in a state of penury. The entire income of the government cannot be much more than three billion dollars a year—more than a billion of which comes from foreign aid. (Military aid—about four hundred million dollars—is not included in these figures.) The figures on the gross national product have not been published, but officials say that, because of the war, they have lost ten years in their economic development; that is, it will take until the end of this year for the gross national product to attain its 1965 level. At the same time, the population has grown so rapidly as to leave the North Vietnamese further behind. A recent government census shows that since 1960 the population has risen from sixteen million to twenty-four million—an increase of fifty per cent. (According to the census, the Montagnard population—the ethnically distinct mountain people—has grown by seventy per cent in the same period. The figure is interesting, given the American assumption of racial conflict between all Montagnards and all Vietnamese. North Vietnam may be the only country in Southeast Asia where the Montagnard population has grown at all in these years.) The standard of living in terms of rice consumption is now only two hundred and fifty kilograms per person per year. Though primarily an agricultural country, North Vietnam cannot feed itself; it imported, according to officials, about a hundred million dollars' worth of food last year. "Food is a major problem for us," Tran Phuong, the economist and social scientist, said. "Before 1964, we had solved the food problem. Since then, we have continued to invest in agriculture, but what we have done just compensates for what was destroyed by the war. Agricultural productivity has increased only slightly, while the population has been growing fast." Last year, North Vietnam had two bumper crops, and rice yields rose, but the country had only two million hectares of riceland. Labor productivity is low, for the country has not been able to mechanize its agriculture—only ten per cent of the farmwork is done by machines—or to transfer manpower to the industrial sector. In the Red River Delta provinces (not including the cities of Hanoi and Haiphong), the average population density is eight hundred and twenty people per square kilometre. Tran Phuong said that in Thai Binh, the most populous of the provinces, "people cultivate rice the way you and I would cultivate a garden."

The problem of capital is now acute. In the past ten years, the country has not been able to accumulate any savings. It has had a thirty-per-cent rate of inflation during that period. Though it should begin to accumulate some capital by the end of 1976, the prospects for quick, large-scale savings are not bright, since it has no easily exploitable resource—"no trump card," as Hoang Tung put it. North Vietnam has a number of mineral resources, including coal, iron ore, bauxite, chromite, tin, zinc, and perhaps offshore oil, but to develop these will require a good deal of time, along with heavy investment in roads, ports, power lines, and so forth. The same is, of course, true for any measure of industrialization. Development will require not only money but also a reorganization of the economy. Decentralization and local self-sufficiency were necessary in wartime, but they do not make for efficiency on a national scale. Last year, Party Secretary Le Duan said, "Each coöperative is an almost independent organization; it has little relationship to the other coöperatives and to the national economy. Although our agriculture has developed in a coöperative fashion, it still clearly has the character of small, dispersed production." Land use is irrational, as is the whole market system. What is more, officials say, management is top-heavy at all levels of the economy. "The state apparatus—particularly administrative bodies, nonproductive organs—has swollen excessively in recent years," Le Duan said. "Sal-

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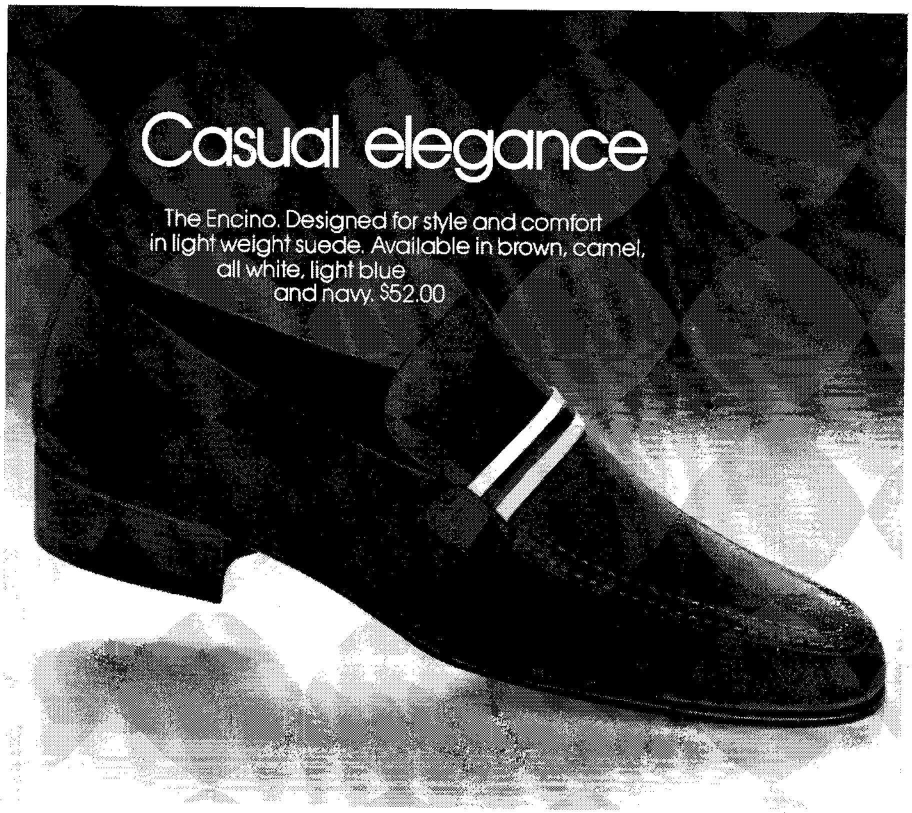

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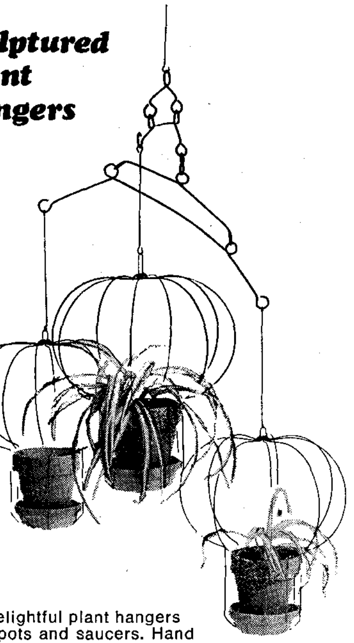

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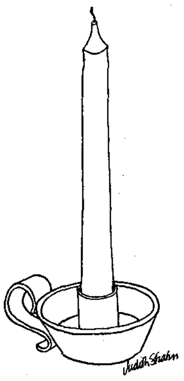
aries and similar expenditures have outstripped the possibilities of the economy." The real organizational difficulty, however, is that all problems must be solved at the same time. If the country cannot improve labor productivity in agriculture, it will have no manpower for industry, and if it cannot industrialize it will have no machinery to increase agricultural productivity. Even more than in most countries, development in North Vietnam is a circular problem, and could easily become a vicious circle.

Faced with this situation, the North Vietnamese leaders last year launched a campaign of criticism more severe and thoroughgoing than any they had undertaken during the previous war years. The campaign began with an article in *Nhan Dan* attacking the falsification of statistics by certain coöperatives, and was next taken up by the department head of a university science faculty, who complained of "small bossism," and it broadened out from there. The leaders attacked the coöperatives for being "corporate" in nature; they complained that the production teams acted like small coöperatives, and that the amount of land worked for private gain in each coöperative had increased from an average of five per cent to an average of eight or nine per cent. As for the state farms, only a few of them, they said, were productive at all. In August, Pham Van Dong spoke of "dishonest and illegal activities" and "acts harming state or coöperative property." More serious still, Le Duan condemned "weaknesses and gaps in Party leadership and state administration," and said, "Our sense of responsibility and the revolutionary will of certain people has diminished."

In January, American analysts in Saigon were reading the criticism as signifying deep social unrest in the North and heralding a Red Guard kind of activity, if not a full-scale purge of Party ranks. That interpretation would be difficult to maintain these days. What seems more likely is that the North Vietnamese leaders were—and are—preparing for what they see as a new stage in their history: the end of the war and the transformation of their economy to a peacetime footing. The harshness of their language may reflect some surprise and disappointment at the results of their stocktaking, but it may also reflect a concern that dealing with economic problems will be different from dealing with the war, and perhaps in some ways more difficult. But the solutions they have proposed are hardly radical; on the contrary.

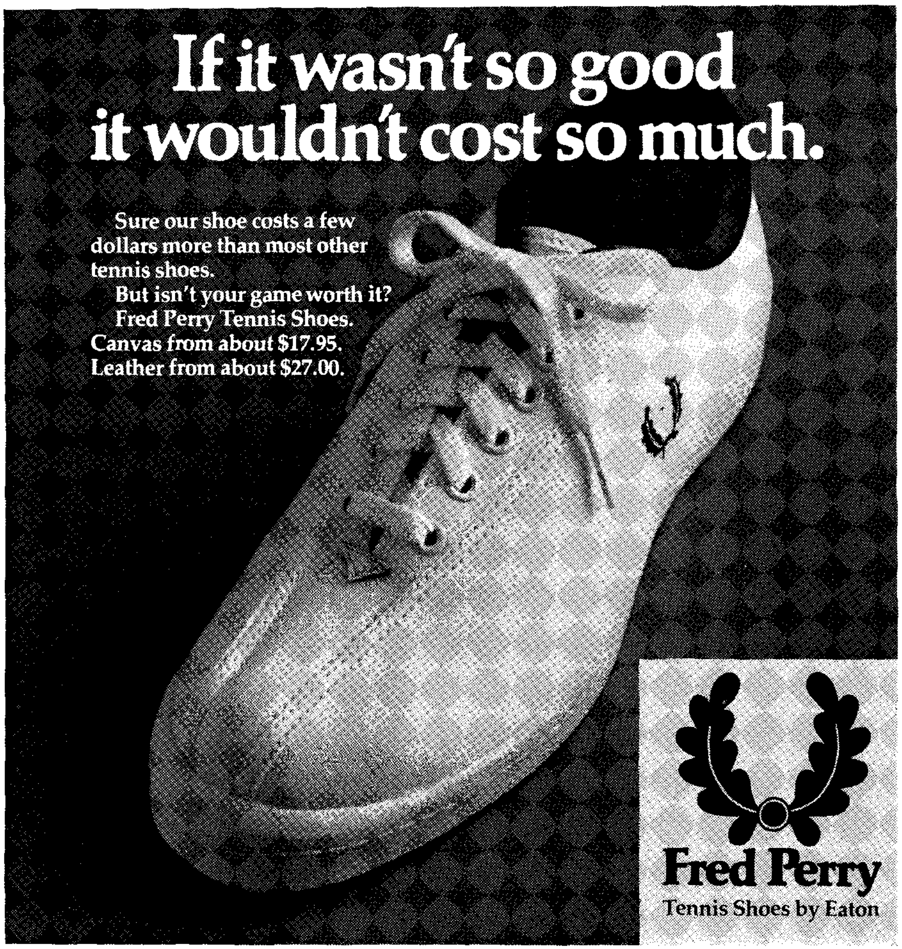
At a trade-union conference in February of last year, Le Duan spoke of the "shortcomings and immaturity of our economic leadership," and then asked rhetorically how good the situation would have been if there had been no mistakes made at all. "Naturally, it would have been better, and in some respects and in some places far better," he continued. "But our poverty and our backwardness would not have been basically done away with. . . . All things considered, *the crux of the matter is that we have not been able to lay the material and technical foundations of Socialism*." The point that Le Duan emphasized may sound merely self-evident, but, ideologically speaking, it answers an important question and defines the approach that the North Vietnamese will take to the problems of reorganization and development.

One of the great debates within the Communist world has been over the issue of whether, on the road to Socialism, political consciousness can be more advanced than the stage of economic development. Because Vietnam was not industrialized, the Vietnamese might have been expected to agree with the Chinese view that political consciousness could come before industrial development. But Ho Chi Minh took the more "orthodox," Soviet position that his country could not be Socialist until it was developed economically. In reaffirming this position, Le Duan was indicating that in the future the emphasis of North Vietnamese policy would be on technological development rather than on social organization and politics. He was, in other words, rejecting the alternative of ideological mobilization and "revolution" within the Party. During our visit, Tran Phuong was even more explicit on this point. When asked which was more important, "Redness" or expertise, he said, "The approach we take is different in emphasis from that of the Chinese. We believe that the first priority is skill and technique. Will is necessary, but it is not enough."



When we brought up the subject of change within the Party with Hoang Tung, the Central Committee spokesman, he, too, emphasized questions of expertise over those of virtue. There was a conflict, he explained, but it was not so much ideological as generational: both the Party and the state administration were filled at all levels with older men, veterans of the first Indo-China war, who did not represent the two-thirds of the population born after 1945, and who tended to lack the skills that would be necessary to modernize the country. As Hoang Tung put it—diplomatically—there was "a tendency to look into past history for guidance and to lack the capacity for present tasks." The Party wanted to replace some of these older people, Hoang Tung said, "but, to be frank, we are having difficulties in this field, because we are faced by a generation that has performed great exploits and given great service to the revolution—without which we would be nothing." What he did not say was that under any system there are almost no political bonds stronger than those forged and tested in a successful guerrilla war. Asked how the Party would resolve this dilemma when its own top leaders were of the same generation, Hoang Tung laughed and said, "The law of nature will take over!" He continued, more seriously, "For some time, this older generation can still serve. We are making efforts to carry out a replacement without the passive aspects. In some ministries, we put younger people in the position of vice-minister, so that the third man can replace the second one in five years or so." He said that there had been no campaign of criticism inside the ministries and that the decisions on replacements were usually made by secret ballot within the leading body of the Party. Not only what he said but the way he said it suggested that there would be no violent rupture within the close-knit group of Party leaders that has governed the country for the past thirty years. "I joke with Le Duan about the subject," he said. "I tell him that if we lived under the old regime I'd give a lot of people noble status—you know, honorary titles."

Whatever goes on in the inner councils of the Party, the leaders are clearly taking a gradualist, pragmatic approach to the reorganization of the economy. In agriculture—as, of course, in industry—the goal is to move from small- to large-scale production. But instead of making a drastic change, such as nationalizing the coöperatives or enlarging them to district size, as the Chinese did during the period of the People's Communes, the Vietnamese are taking a series of modest measures designed to increase the productivity of the co-ops. They are, for instance,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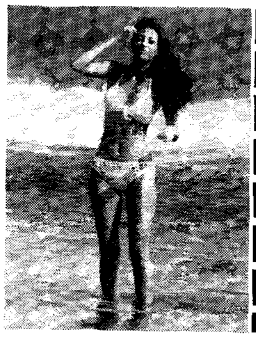

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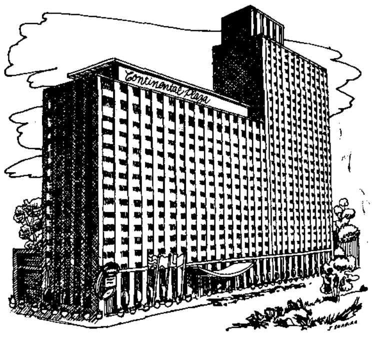

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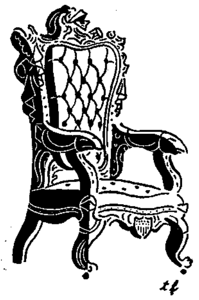
asking the co-op boards to become planners rather than contractors for the work teams; they are asking them to develop specialized production groups and to send people away for training in agronomy, bookkeeping, and other skills. District-level officials are now collecting soil samples, so that in the future they can advise the co-ops on the most productive way to use their land. What these officials would like is to wean some of the co-ops away from rice to secondary crops and to standardize the growing of fruits and vegetables for export. The basic problem, as North Vietnamese officials see it, is mechanization. But that, they expect, will take a very long time, because it must wait for the development of industry. "If we are too ambitious, mechanization is sure to be a failure," Hoang Tung said.



Industry is what the economists are most interested in, and what most of the capital investment is going into. Still, in this sector, too, the goals are modest. By the end of this year, planners hope to restore the industrial plant to its 1965 capacity, so that the country's first five-year plan can begin in 1976. The first priorities are to increase the output of coal, iron, electricity, cement, and chemical fertilizer. The Thai Nguyen steelworks now produces only pig iron, but planners hope that in two or three years it will regain its prewar capacity of a hundred and seventy thousand metric tons of steel annually. By 1980, the North Vietnamese would like to be producing ten million tons of coal, three million or more tons of cement, three to four million kilowatt-hours of electricity, a million tons of fertilizer, some chemicals and synthetic fibres, and some machinery, such as hundred-horsepower engines. By then, too, they expect thirty per cent of agricultural labor to be mechanized. At present, two-thirds of the electricity in North Vietnam comes from the burning of fuel, but planners expect the ratio to be reversed as they continue to build up the local hydroelectric systems. In ten years' time, they hope to begin work on a huge dam southwest of Hanoi to complete an irrigation system for the Delta and produce a million six hundred thousand kilowatts of electricity.

Though the outline of the five-year plan is not yet complete, North Vietnamese officials have already given some thought to the general shape they want the economy to take in the more distant future, for—and this is another big problem—long-term and short-term goals must be considered together. According to Tran Phuong, what they would like to have is an economy based on heavy industry, light industry, and agricultural processing. As for the physical planning of this new plant, they want the heavy industry to be concentrated in large factories, which are most efficient; light industry to be dispersed to regional centers; and the district capitals to have such things as small machine-tool and repair workshops. The country will have to urbanize somewhat, and planners would like to see cities of between fifty thousand and two hundred thousand people, with the average urban center containing no more than a hundred thousand. "From what we have learned of the experience of other countries, we don't want big cities, with all their complicated problems," Tran Phuong said. Planners hope that the rate of population growth will decrease, with further family-planning measures, to two per cent a year, and they see this as a realistic goal, since it has already dropped from three per cent to two and four-tenths in the past six or seven years.

ALL this, of course, lies far ahead. The current problem is how to finance even the modest five-year plan. At the moment, about thirty per cent of the country's civilian budget, or about a billion dollars, is going into what officials call "basic construction" of economic projects and the systems needed to support them. Whereas in 1965 the country raised most of its own capital, now all this money comes from abroad. The Soviet Union and China contribute the major share of it—perhaps seven hundred million dollars—in roughly equal amounts; Cuba and the Eastern European countries give much of the balance. North Vietnamese officials suppose that in the future this level of aid will decline somewhat—that a drop would be only natural after the war is over. They also expect a much greater percentage of it to be in the form of long-term loans. At present, several foreign countries are financing, and supplying the technology for, complete projects. The Chinese, for instance, are building a bridge across the Red River, the Russians are building a dam, the Rumanians are building a cement plant, and the Yugoslavs are building a factory for concentrated animal feed and one for synthetic construction materials.

A number of Western European countries, including France, Holland, Sweden, and Denmark, are also giving aid in various forms to North Vietnam. Sweden, the largest donor, is contributing several million dollars this year for the construction of a new children's hospital, the rebuilding of parts of Bach Mai Hospital, and the delivery of birth-control devices. This year, it will send a hundred and sixty million dollars and two hundred Swedish technicians to begin the construction of a modern pulp-and-paper plant. The dollar value of these Western European aid projects is not great, but the fact that they exist at all has some significance. While planning for economic development, the North Vietnamese government has also been engaged in planning for a new stage in its international relations. Over the past year or so, it has taken steps to increase its diplomatic ties with non-Communist countries. These steps have not been dramatic, for many of the old issues still linger, in various forms. The country has, for instance, usually refused to exchange embassies with governments that do not in some way recognize the Provisional Revolutionary Government in the South. Still, North Vietnam has ambassadors in most European states and in a number of Arab countries, and it also has official representation in a number of countries that, like Britain, will not recognize the P.R.G.

Recently, however, North Vietnam's most important initiatives have been in Southeast Asia. In past months, it has made overtures to a number of governments that supported the American war, including two—Thailand and the Philippines—that sent troops to South Vietnam. It has received an official delegation from Malaysia, and the only obstacle to the establishment of full relations with that nation has been the issue of the P.R.G. Since last year, there have been both official and non-official contacts between Bangkok and Hanoi. The North Vietnamese Foreign Ministry has indicated that it would not open diplomatic relations with Bangkok until Thailand ceased to provide bases for American strategic bombers and American military activities in Indo-China. But it has also spoken of possible repatriation of the large Vietnamese community in Thailand, which has caused the Thai government much trouble in the northeast. As anticipated, the new Thai government has promised to get rid of the American

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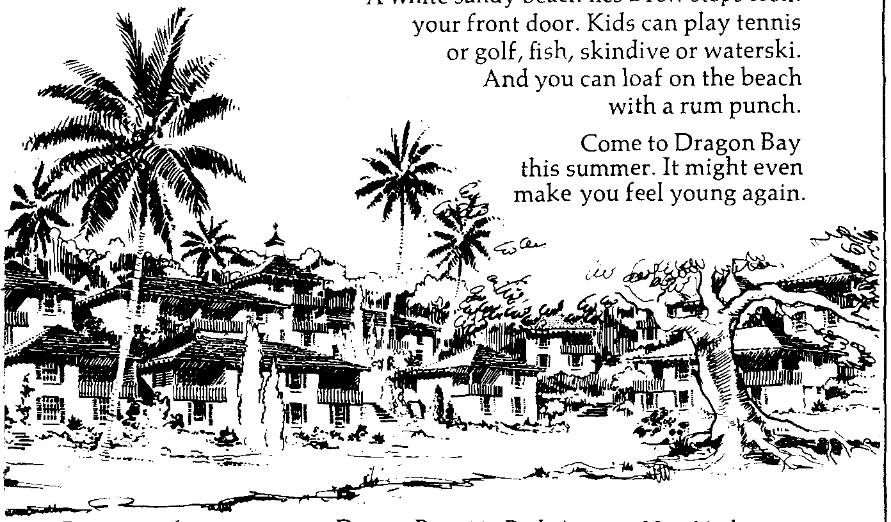

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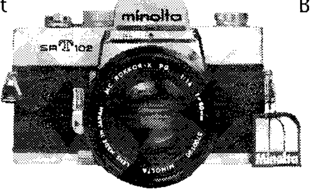

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bases, so recognition may not be far away. Quite possibly, the Philippines will follow along.

Quite clearly, North Vietnamese officials anticipate that an end to the war will bring an end to the American military presence in Southeast Asia, and a rather different balance of power there. What they want, they say, is a neutral Southeast Asia, whose governments—different as they may be in other respects—are linked by their desire for independence and regional coöperation. This may mean a situation in which all the larger powers—the Soviet Union, China, the United States, and Japan—play a role, but none plays a dominant role. The desire is a plausible one for the Vietnamese, and, given their present alliances, a quite practical one. The neutralization of Southeast Asia is, to begin with, consistent with Soviet policy. After all, the Soviet Union has been dealing with the existing governments for some time and promoting new trade relations, for it is in the Russians' interest to see that China does not have a monopoly in the area, and there are indications that they feel that preventing this will require the coöperation of Japan and the United States. Such a division of power may not be the best possible one for the Chinese, but the fact that they, too, have recently been cultivating some of the least revolutionary governments in the area—those of Thailand and the Philippines—indicates that they may be willing to go along. The irony is that the North Vietnamese were calling for the neutralization of Southeast Asia not only before the détente but before the Sino-Soviet split, and before the United States sent troops to Vietnam. Given their historical fear of domination by China, such a policy was just as much in their interest then as it is now. In this regard, ten years of a bloody and costly war have changed nothing.

The North Vietnamese have defined their new foreign-policy position further by what they have done and said about their economic relations with various other countries. In the past year, North Vietnam has begun to trade with Japan and a number of Western European nations. It has done so even though it has very little to trade (it sells a bit of coal to Japan) and has had almost no experience with capitalist markets. Officials in Hanoi say that this is only a beginning—that in the future they hope to have a fairly dense network of economic relations with the non-Communist world. Asked which of the smaller Communist

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countries they would most resemble in this regard, they say none of them. "Our policy is that of independence," one official said. "So we will not be like China or Korea or the COMECON countries. We will be freer than they are." China and the Soviet Union will, the North Vietnamese say, remain their most important sources of capital, but they would like investment from other countries, including the United States. (The Paris peace agreement, they say, is a basis for an economic relationship with this country.) What is more, they say, North Vietnam is interested in commercial investments as well as in aid, and in private as well as in state capital. Right now, officials are negotiating a loan agreement with a Western European government whereby that government will build a factory and be repaid in goods when the factory goes into operation.

What is most surprising, North Vietnamese officials say that they would like to make joint-venture agreements with governments and private companies. They think that foreign companies might be interested in some of their mineral and agricultural resources that other Communist countries don't need; they also think that Western or Japanese companies might want to use their largest resource—their manpower. "We believe that Vietnamese labor is no less skilled than the Chinese," Tran Phuong said. "And wages here are about a tenth of what they are in the United States." Another official remarked that if, for example, a Swiss company wanted to set up a watch factory, the North Vietnamese would be willing to consider a deal, because of the gains it would bring them in technology and expertise. The spectre of economic imperialism does not seem to worry North Vietnam's officials. "Joint ventures couldn't affect our sovereignty, because we wouldn't permit free investment," Tran Phuong explained. "The conditions would have to be negotiated by us. Besides, if half a million G.I.s couldn't subjugate us, a few dozen foreign companies won't be able to."

According to foreign diplomats in Hanoi, the North Vietnamese leaders have both economic and political motives for such a radical departure. "They want to buy high-quality technology," one Eastern European ambassador said. "They don't want to close themselves off, as the North Koreans did, and spend an enormous amount of effort on industrial development, only to find themselves far behind in a few years because Russian-

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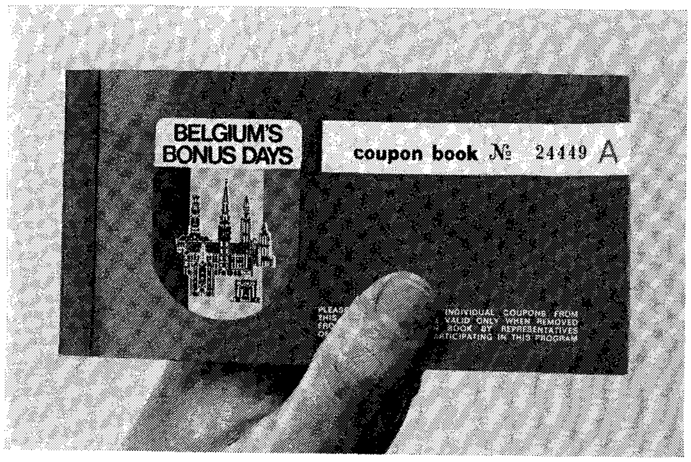

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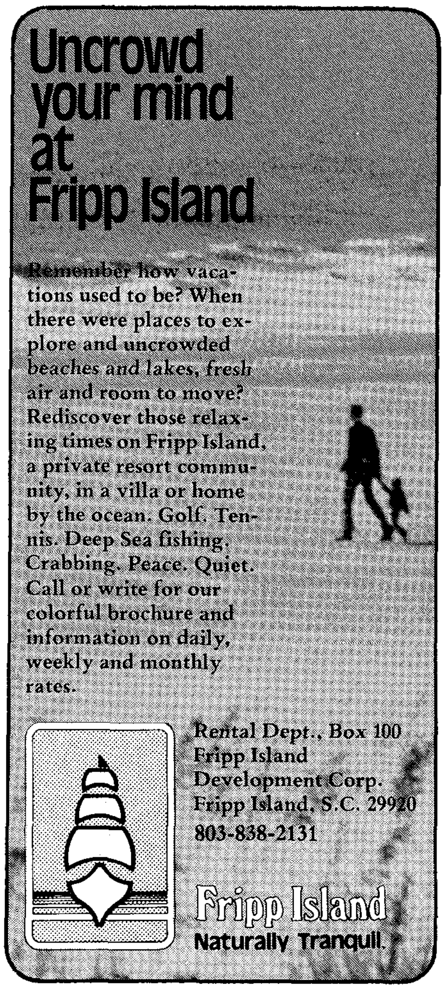

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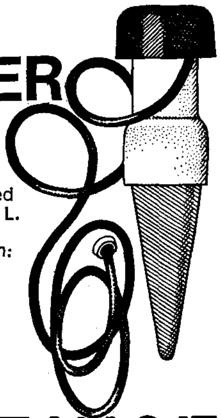

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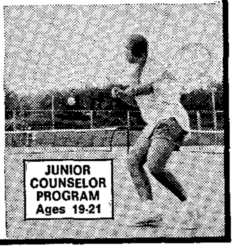

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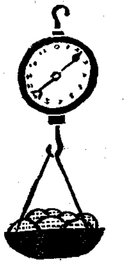
designed factories are not as technologically advanced or as efficient as they should be." This analysis was confirmed by what North Vietnamese economists said on the subject of technology and by the fact that North Vietnam is already being as choosy as it can be in that realm. The Swedish pulp-and-paper plant will, for instance, be of the same model that the Swedes are selling to the Soviet Union; the Yugoslav factory for concentrated animal feed will be of the latest design, and will be entirely automated. Foreign diplomats say that the political motive for this opening to the capitalist world is quite as strong as the economic. "The Vietnamese want to keep their old friendships, but they find that the balance they have established between China and the Soviet Union—the balance they have developed to near perfection—is not enough," one diplomat explained. "They need a third way, because they want to be independent. Their desire for independence is their driving force."

That word "independence" is the starting and finishing point for any ideological discussion in North Vietnam. It comes up most frequently in regard to the Chinese. "Even the concept 'Red' we understand differently from them," one official said. "The Chinese equate 'Red' with Mao Tse-tung, but the Vietnamese call 'Red' all those who love their country and do the most to help their country." Vietnamese officials often speak as if there were no content to their ideology other than nationalism. One Party leader, for instance, told us about an ideological training session in which Party members stopped the instructor when he tried to explain to them the difference between dogmatism and revisionism. "Don't tell us about that!" they cried. "We already have too much to think about with the floods, the typhoons, and the bombing!" What the story demonstrates, of course, is merely the attitude—common to all Vietnamese—that there is no point in knowledge that cannot be put to use. And it is Marxism-Leninism, the "science" of Marxism-Leninism, that the Vietnamese leaders look to for guidance, to put to use. The leaders see no contradiction between Communism and national independence; indeed, they feel that they could not have had one without the other. Still, as they present the matter, independence comes first, and if there is a conflict the other imperatives, such as that of Socialist unity, must be reconciled with it, rather than vice versa. Independence is the only issue that the North Vietnamese can be said to be fanatical about. Hoang Tung remarked, in a slightly different context, "We are not extremists. We don't confine ourselves to one form of struggle. Whatever will be useful to the struggle we use." Independence is, to be sure, a complicated notion in this day of global economics and global politics, and it is particularly complicated for small countries. But for the North Vietnamese it has at least one specific meaning, and that is the liberation of the South from American influence, and the unity of the whole country.



PHUOC BINH, the capital of Phuoc Long Province, fell while I was in Hanoi. The significance of the battle was not entirely clear at the time. I did not know that the attack would be the first of a major North Vietnamese offensive and the beginning of the final phase of the war. The North Vietnamese did not so describe it. Still, as Phuoc Binh was the first provincial capital that North Vietnamese and P.R.G. troops had taken since the signing of the peace accord in Paris, it clearly marked an important change in the military balance in the South and an equally important change in North Vietnamese strategy. In the nearly two years since the peace accord was signed, the war in the South had been a stalemate: another variation of the stalemate that had existed since 1960, when the National Liberation Front (the Vietcong) was formed, or perhaps longer—since 1954, or 1945. Each side accused the other of violating the accord, and, whether in action or reaction, both sides did violate almost every article that concerned the ceasefire. The charges and countercharges were academic, however, for all parties to the negotiations, including Henry Kissinger, knew very well that there could be no ceasefire without a political settlement. Le Duc Tho had written a formula for a political settlement into the accord—a step-by-step procedure that was to begin with the formation in South Vietnam of a National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord. The next step was to be the establishment of democratic liberties, including freedom of speech, assembly, and the press, and the third step would be a national election in which all parties would be represented. The government that emerged from that election would, the accord said, negotiate with North Vietnam for an eventual reunification of the country. President Thieu had resisted the inclusion of these articles in the treaty, as he had resisted Kissinger's tacit acceptance of the presence of North Vietnamese troops in the South. And after the accord was signed, Thieu made only a nominal attempt to negotiate the terms of these articles with the P.R.G. Though the Nixon Administration had supported a successful compromise formula and a coalition government in Laos, it refused to discuss a similar outcome in Vietnam, and gave full backing to President Thieu.

In the first year after the peace accord, the Saigon government did very well on the battlefield. According to American analysts in Saigon, it pushed the P.R.G. and North Vietnamese troops out of about fifteen per cent of the territory they had held in January of 1973. The success of the offensive created a dilemma for the Communists: on the one hand, they were losing ground by not committing their main forces to battle; on the other hand, as documents of the period show, they were worried that the commitment of these forces might increase the level of fighting to the point where the Nixon Administration would call for a resumption of American bombing. Their solution was to counterattack on a small scale and wait and see what happened. In 1974, Communist main-force units went into action for the first time to attack district capitals and small military bases. Significantly, their initial advances came during the summer, in the rainy season, when in the past superior logistics had always permitted Saigon to take the initiative. Now, with their network of roads through the Central Highlands, and with the decline in the mobility of the South Vietnamese forces, the Communists could move faster than Saigon at all times of year. By the fall, they had regained all the territory they had lost. And on October 8th the P.R.G. issued a statement calling for "an end to the U.S. military involvement and interference in South Vietnam, the overthrow of Nguyen Van Thieu and his clique, and the establishment in Saigon of an administration willing to implement the Paris agreement seriously." The statement was a signal that the Communists believed the balance of forces in the South to have changed decisively—and not only as a result of their gains on the battlefield.

Early this year, Hoang Tung gave a succinct analysis of the situation in South Vietnam. "Washington is facing

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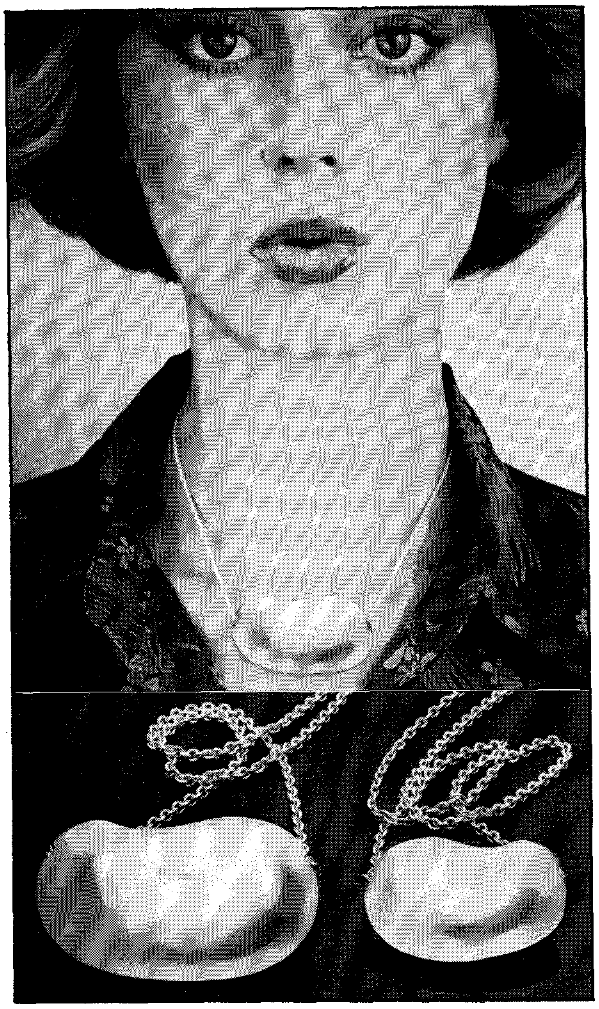

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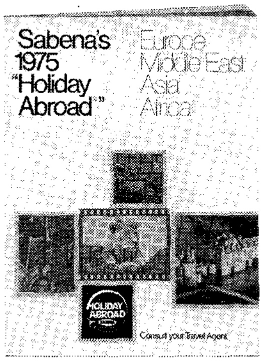

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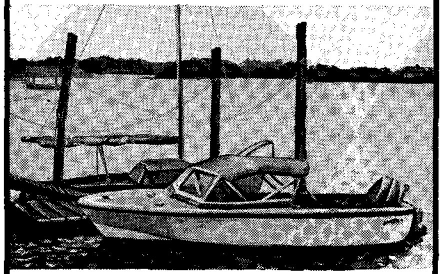

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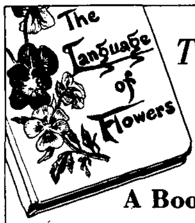

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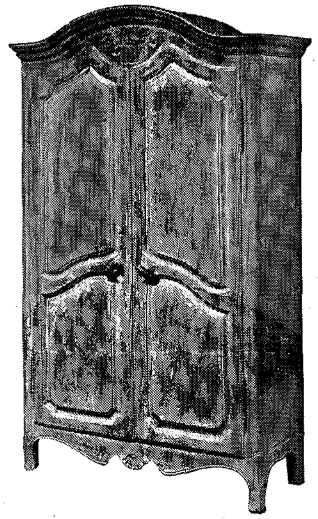
a situation in South Vietnam similar to that of 1963," he said. "Thieu is losing militarily, and he is politically isolated. Suppose that in the last two years Thieu had been able to get rid of the Provisional Revolutionary Government forces, to wipe out the infrastructure, and to extend the control of Saigon over the Mekong Delta. Then he could have consolidated the administration and the Army, begun to develop the economy, and excluded all opposition political forces. But this plan failed, and the result is a crisis, in which it is necessary for Thieu to pull in rather than to push back. He can't consolidate, and therefore the economic situation worsens, which leads to many political problems for the regime. There are contradictions even within Thieu's own leading bodies: the two personalities, Thieu and Khiem [Tran Thien Khiem, then the Premier], don't get along, there is no unity in the House and Senate, and Thieu's own Democratic Party is conceded to be nonexistent."

During the last few months of 1974, North Vietnam had also revised its estimate of the strength of the American commitment to the war. It was no coincidence that the statement of the Provisional Revolutionary Government came so shortly after the furor over impeachment and the resignation of President Nixon. By January, North Vietnamese officials were saying they felt that President Ford was in a weaker position than Nixon had been in before Watergate. While they did not discount the possibility of an American reintervention in force, they indicated that they thought the chances small. And they did not seem to expect a large-scale increase in American aid to Saigon. "How much more money can Mr. Ford pour into this land? We guess not much," Hoang Tung said. "The United States is not short of money. No, it's not that. It is that the political situation Mr. Ford is in does not allow him to have as much as he wishes." At the same time, officials in Hanoi did not expect Ford to change policy and dump Thieu; they felt, they said, that Ford, in his weakened position, would have just as much difficulty doing that as doing the opposite. And they were not going to be patient. "There was a theory of 'decent interval,'" Hoang Tung said. "According to this theory, Mr. Kissinger's 'honorable solution' to the war meant a two-year interval between the withdrawal of American troops and the fall of Thieu. Well, the two years are over. We think that the Provisional

time will tell



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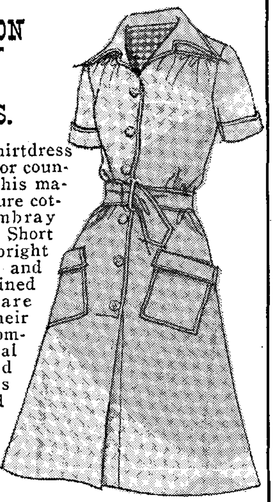

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Government and the North Vietnamese are doing their best to implement the Paris agreement, but now, as we have said before, the ball is in the court of the White House."

In speaking of their goals in the South, North Vietnamese officials stressed over and over again that the one object of their military activities was to carry out the political articles of the peace accord. Their insistence on this point may have been a merely tactical maneuver designed to create some legitimacy for their military operations, but the indications are that they took, and still take, these articles very seriously. In the first place, the articles—based on the draft submitted by Le Duc Tho—contain much of the program that was drawn up by the National Liberation Front when it was founded, and for the past two years they have been the whole focus of Communist political work in the South. In the second place, the war in the South must end in some kind of political settlement. After thirty years of intermittent fighting, there is enough anti-Communist sentiment in the South and enough sheer anarchy to make a swift seizure of power troublesome, if not disastrous in the long run. Both Provisional Revolutionary Government and North Vietnamese officials have said as much. What they do not say, though it may be equally true, is that not even they have the resources to provide an immediate solution to the huge economic and social problems created by the war. With Thieu out and the United States unable or unwilling to reintervene, they would have a great deal to gain by hanging back, by not taking on sole responsibility, by preparing for a fairly long period of transition, in which they could do the necessary political work in the cities.

North Vietnamese and P.R.G. officials made it plain to us that they had done a certain amount of detailed planning for the period of transition. One of them, for instance, discussed the way in which the voting would work in the election called for by the peace accord. In some areas, he said, candidates would come from opposing parties; in other areas, the voting would be to select representatives from the single party in control. The end product, he indicated, would be a legislative body containing representatives of all groups and all "strata" of the population. This new government would, among other things, go about making relations with North Vietnam normal by opening up the postal system and initiating trade. During this period, according to Tran Phuong, North Vietnam would welcome Southern businessmen who wanted to buy coal, for instance, or sell rice. North Vietnamese officials, however, said that it would be a very long time—five or ten years, perhaps—before there would be any question of reuniting the two halves of Vietnam. "We are not impatient," Pham Van Dong said. "Reunification will come, for who can prevent it? Go and ask Gerald Ford. But the Paris agreement must be implemented first. There must be peace, democracy, national concord, and a new government in Saigon. Reunification will come. I will go back to the South." Pham Van Dong comes from Quang Ngai Province, in the South. "But as for the date, I must visit an astrologer."

North Vietnamese officials spoke of a desire for an eventual mending of relations with the United States. They indicated that they had been preparing for it in much the same way they had prepared for a resumption of relations with France after the first Indo-China war. "When the Geneva agreement was signed, Ho Chi Minh told me that the French were very proud of their civilization, and that this was the first time they had lost a war to a colony," Hoang Tung said. "He recommended that when I wrote about our victory I do so in a way that would not excite their nationalist and chauvinist sentiment. After the Paris agreement was signed, I remembered Ho's teachings, and I wrote about our victory only somewhat." The North Vietnamese may hold to this attitude toward the United States, but they are conscious of anniversaries. This August will be the thirtieth anniversary of the beginning of their revolution and the beginning of the first Indo-China war.

—FRANCES FITZGERALD

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MOST FASCINATING NEWS STORY OF THE WEEK

[*The following item, reprinted in its entirety, is from the Anchorage Times*]

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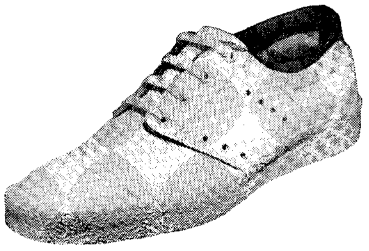

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

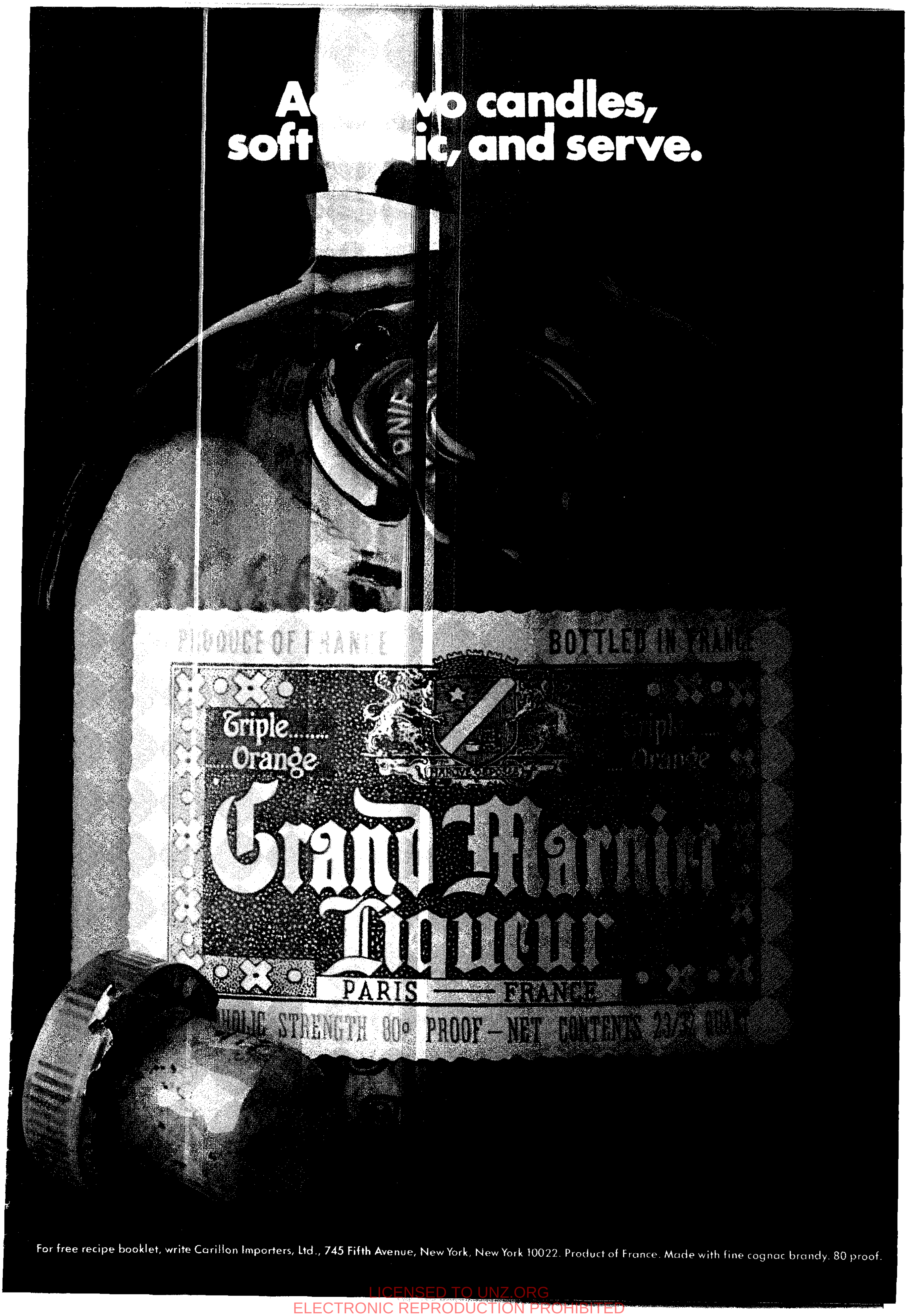
A Filmmaker's Meditation on America

WHILE I was watching Peter Davis's "Hearts and Minds" for the second time, at a noon public performance at Cinema I, a woman of about sixty-five came alone into the three-quarters-full theatre. The other people in the audience were nearly all men, also unaccompanied. The woman hurried to the row I was in. She stood stock-still beside me for a few minutes, looking at the screen with festering surprise. Obviously, when I thought about it, the title had misled her: she had escaped from the rain outside to see what she expected would be a love story; instead of that, there was a screen showing wounded Vietnamese, wounded G.I.s, assured United States policymakers in office spouting upholstered bombast, confused and skeletal Vietnamese sorrowfully quitting the debris of their American-bombed homes. The woman, who was wearing a plastic mackintosh and carrying an umbrella, a book, and two shopping bags, moved to stand in front of me with her back to the screen. She said softly, "Oh dear. I hope it isn't a war film." I said that it was an anti-war film, about the effects of Vietnam, and that I believed she'd be interested. She shook her head wanly but pressed onward and over me to sit two seats away. A three-dollar ticket is a three-dollar ticket, and it was wet outside. I glanced at her now and then. She took in everything, looked startled, cried. At the end, she went on sitting in her place, with her eyes still on the now blank screen, and said to me, without turning round, "I didn't know we'd done that." Pause. "I liked what the American woman said about a mature person's being able to make a mistake, so why can't a government?"

It would be a million pities if the inapt outburst by Bert Schneider (the film's co-producer with Peter Davis) in reading aloud a cable from the Provisional Revolutionary Government's Ambassador to the Paris peace talks, Dinh Ba Thi, which he did in the heat of accepting an Oscar, were to debase the film into seeming a simpleminded broadsheet or a piece of penny-in-the-slot cant about the woes of imperialism. I say "a million" because before the outburst and the passing hubbub of complaints "Hearts and Minds" had every chance of reaching the minds of a million Americans likely to react with anger to a picture thus falsely branded as didactic but with interest and warmth to the reflection upon America that this picture really is. The Academy Awards incident was a red herring for a number of reasons. In the first place, it was *ex post facto*, and as irrelevant to the content and meaning of the film as the clothes that someone might wear on the Academy's platform; the picture itself is what critics and audiences need to address themselves to, and that was completely edited and finished in July of 1974. In the second place, the matter and the intention of the film are Peter Davis's, not Bert Schneider's: Schneider played no part in either the shooting or the editing, and, according to Davis, was generous enough to refrain even from trying to have any political effect on the tone of the picture. In the third place, Schneider's speech added editorial comment to a film that Davis had been very careful to allow to speak for itself. As to Davis's credentials as a reporter—and it is vital that we trust him to be a good witness—there was courage and probity in his TV program "The Selling of the Pentagon," which had a more trenchant and maybe less fully adult structure, and I am persuaded that the even temper, the heed for justice, and the charity of spirit that flood "Hearts and Minds" give it the right to be considered not only a true report but also a work that has the individual point of view possessed by art.

Before making the bulk of the film—he had already shot some footage—Peter Davis went in 1972 to a lot of America's national parks. He wanted to clear his own head by asking people there whether they felt differently about their country then from the way they had felt at the end of the Second World War (or, if he was interviewing someone too young to remember that, at the time of Korea). Only the last of his series of questions was about Vietnam. He chose to do his reconnaissance in national parks because he thought the people there would be in a reflective mood, with America on their minds. The broad range of their responses has been assimilated into the film, along with much, much else, for "Hearts and Minds" is not at all adequately defined if it is taken to be a mere piece of adversary journalism speaking up against the war. It is an extremely troubled and contemplative picture about some of the origins and some of the consequences of the American involvement in Vietnam. Impressive that a work so coherent and mature can have been completed when the book is even now not closed. I don't mean that the happenings since the time when the footage ends,

"*Let's face it, Doris. This marriage is Chapter XI!*"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in July of 1973, have made it obsolete—not a bit, unless a sense of history is something to be pulped when it is less than two years old. It is from the attitudes and actions depicted in the film that the present terrible debacle has flowed. The film's antennae are very alert, and the information received is not editorially interpreted: it is merely passed on to us, which is why it can powerfully affect minds as open as the mind of the woman who was sitting near me in the cinema.

Without commentary, "Hearts and Minds" emphasizes the psychically cogent fact that the Americans on combat duty in Vietnam were often fighting a battle with the invisible. When a high-flying aviator let loose a load of bombs, his imagination declined to saddle his conscience with visions of the almost impossible to take in, and decided that what his eyes couldn't see didn't exist. A veteran from Oklahoma describes "the thrill you get when you see something explode," and goes on to say, "You never could see the people. You never saw any blood. You never could hear any screams. It was very clean. I was a technician." Earlier, he likens bombing to "a singer doing an aria." Not at all a bad man. But he couldn't manage, at the time, to put himself in the position of the people on the ground who were the audience of that lethal aria. The film takes on the task in his stead. Ruined peasants, robbed of everything, speak with tragic brevity. An aging Vietnamese standing without anger in the wreckage of his bombed home says, pointing to a pile of rubble, "I used to raise pigs here." "Where was the kitchen?" asks an American voice offscreen. The man gestures to a bomb crater. And a very old woman, toothless, is asked about her dead sister of seventy-eight. "What did she die of?" "Bombs," says the woman simply, as if bombs were a natural malady. There is only one outburst against the Americans, and that is good-humored: "First they bomb as much as they please, then they film." (Peter Davis was rather good-humored to use it.) One sees footage of Nixon, and contrasts his gobbledygook with the victims' eloquence. "Throughout the war in Vietnam, the United States has exercised a degree of restraint unprecedented in the annals of war," the film shows him idiotically saying. Back in Vietnam, peasants look at fragmented bodies and at splinters of pretty crockery lying in the mud. A Vietnamese woman, crazed with grief, tries to climb into a grave. Straight afterward, General Westmoreland says

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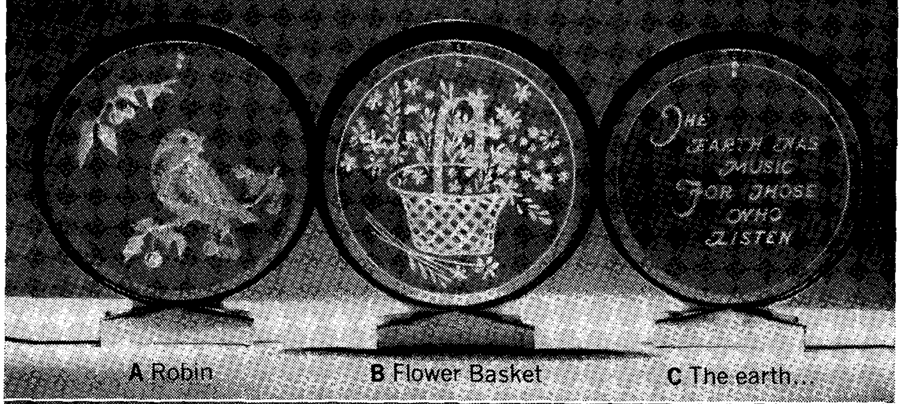

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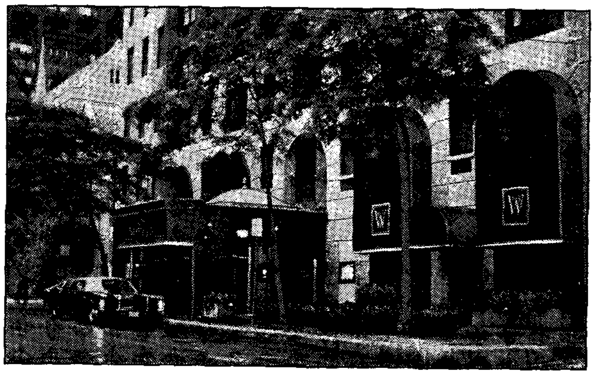

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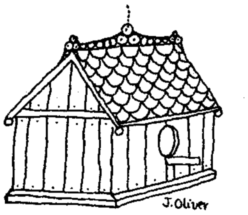
soberly, "The Oriental doesn't put the same high price on life as does the Westerner. Life is cheap in the Orient. As the philosophy of the Orient expresses it, life is not important." The cut between the two scenes is not a piece of easy pointmaking. Both things happened, and their weight doesn't lie in their juxtaposition. If all the sequences in "Hearts and Minds" were to be thrown up in the air and put together again in random order, the meaning of the film would still be the same.

Practically everyone we listen to in "Hearts and Minds" seems to be in the dark. For Americans, here or there, the war made no sense. We see an American in his own country saying, "I think we're fighting for the North Vietnamese, ain't we?" An American soldier in combat says, "They say we're fighting for something. I dunno." Everyone had to find shelter somewhere. The Vietnamese found it in religion, in doggedness, in making coffins if they could afford the wood. Most Americans found it in distance. Some of these—Daniel Ellsberg and Clark Clifford, for instance, who both speak in the film—found it in a change of opinion so violent as to amount to an act of self-ransack. Americans in Vietnam found it in willed ignorance, or in flag wagging, or in the offering of small kindnesses, or in conduct so callous that there was no chance that life in Vietnam would relate to anything they knew. We see them behaving unspeakably in a brothel. A G.I. in a street scene, after a scornful appraisal of the worth of a whore whom he assesses through a semi-curtained window, responds viciously to the price she asks. "Too much," he says. Too much to pay for *her.* A repatriated American stiffneck who has been imprisoned by the North Vietnamese finds his particular solace in not budging an inch from the mindless chauvinism he set out with. Back in America, heavily still in uniform on a rabble-rousing lecture tour, he says of the look of Vietnam, "If it wasn't for the people, it would be very pretty." This occurs in a Catholic grammar school, what's more, and in answer to a question from a child, what's more. The future, if it is recoverable, lies with other sorts of mind. Perhaps the most passionately searching scenes in this most searching film are the ones that put on record the changing thought of some returned G.I.s. We are aware of their trying very hard to take in the unassimilable at last. If they can do it, it will be an expression of some pliant natural genius. A start has been made. The same chilling aviator who talked of himself as a technician at the beginning of the film appears with a new view of things near the end. He is asked by an unseen American if he thinks we've learned anything from all this. He says, with his head down, "I think we're trying not to." Then he looks up, and grins through tears that he struggles for a painfully long time to shed. "I think *I'm* trying not to, sometimes. I can't even cry easily—my manhood image."



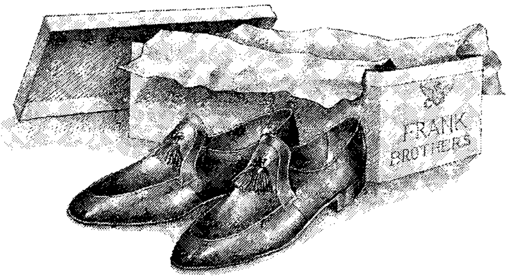
"Hearts and Minds" isn't really so much a film opposing the American intervention in Vietnam as an inquiry into the effect that the Vietnam war has had on Americans. It is about America's view of itself, which has been knocked into a still inchoate new form. In its essence, "Hearts and Minds" is a complex tale about possessing apparently infallible power and then finding that it doesn't work. Peter Davis has thought hard, and he sees the Vietnam war as the vehicle for that sense of power in America. After the Second World War—when America's military force had been used on a side that was, for once, simply and visibly the right one—the nation's strength seemed mighty enough to have been God-given. Now, for a growing mass of the population, the notion that any military power can be God-given has crumbled. With it has gone a crucial tenet in the established dogma of Americanness, which had come to include an almost religious notion that there was rectitude in winning. The belief developed from this unconscious popular formula in logic:

> We have triumphed in the past by might.
> In the past we have been right.
> ∴ Might will go on being right.
> ∴ America will go on being right.
> By extension, since God's will is right (=triumphant), America is divinely selected to be right (=triumphant).
> ∴ America and the Almighty will go on triumphing hand in hand, equipped with the fire and the sword.

Davis's film takes another look at this edifice of fallacies. He gazes particularly hard at the step that equates blessedness and winning, and concludes that it will just about do to nourish the fervent souls of drum majorettes. The picture shows us an array of majorettes on a football field, looking as awkwardly missionary as a parade of topless waitresses about to be decorated by the First Lady on the twelfth anniversary of Toplessness. Quietly emphatic on the same obvious but crucial topic of winning, Davis catches a hysterical football coach yelling victory exhortations in a locker room, where athleticism and a sense of deified purpose oddly mingle; he also includes footage of a fatuous minister urging high-school boys to win a game ahead. "This is serious business that we're involved in, and that's religious, and God cares," the minister says, as if football were a dummy run for what he would probably call "the great game of life itself." He does actually say, "May you be winners in the big game, but, more importantly, winners in the biggest game of all, which we all play. Let us pray."

But the theorem about the divine right of winning has now been disproved as thoroughly as the divine right of kings once was, and more traumatically, because there are a greater number of decent, shamed, confused citizens here than there were ever despotic monarchs in Europe. Americans have had to cope for years with an instinct that something terribly important was happening in Southeast Asia, though there has never been a comprehensive attempt by a President or a TV network or a major film company to vindicate their instinct. They have had only their nerve ends to judge by; and the knowledge of the risks run by draft dodgers, who must have been empowered by a very strong idea; and the evidence of brave, prophetic independent films, like Eugene S. Jones's "A Face of War" (1968) and now Peter Davis's thematically more complex picture. Television news has sold the public short with its method of tucking shots of faraway suffering between commercials for hair shampoos and parish-pump stories about this week's Con Edison mishap. Treated so, the repeated pitiful faces on the screen have been reduced to nothing more than the insignia of suffering, for we have been given no sense of cause and effect.

"Hearts and Minds" is endowed with that sense. We have been sorely in need of it, because the once-supportive theorem about power has been in visible collapse for years. The film recalls the way President Johnson, poorly grasping the need to turn the impossible war into a police action in the public mind, subconsciously undercut the effort by falling into the trap of continuing to say, "Make no mistake about it. . . . We are going to win." The urge to "win" in the traditional



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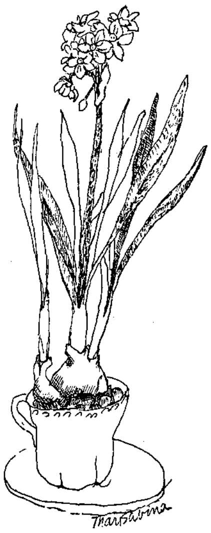
bellicose style has revealed itself to be a dud impulse, and Peter Davis shows us that the revelation has cruelly baffled many veterans and many civilians. So far, only a few voices in the Republic have been raised to express a point of view as ample and poised as the one that underlies "Hearts and Minds." Davis understands that, by the criterion of "winning," the "loss" of Vietnam—which never belonged to anyone but the Vietnamese anyway—has dealt a body blow to a long-entertained American notion that "sincerity" is enough not only in the holding of a belief but also for insuring conquest by the use of force. Sincerity has proved itself *not* to be enough; so has the parallel American ethic of diligence and its due reward. Simple shows of devoutness and industry on the part of Presidents and their advisers aren't any longer adequate. The acts of going to church with the family on Sunday and of working on tropical holidays solve no complicated international crises. Nor does American might, which has turned out to be not at all a sacred virtue bound to succeed: it hasn't triumphed in any sense in Indo-China, and its profane exercise there has caused far more suffering than all the other unholy Holy Wars put together. But a lot of Americans still seem hoplessly eager to remain superstitious, even if they are not devout and abjure belief in an afterlife. Faith in America's power used to be capable of deputizing for faith in God, because it helped zealots to dismiss the power of other political systems with as much beatific security as monotheists dismissing heathens. Now that the power has been found wanting, it is the superstitious here who have been most painfully affected. It is for these very people, perhaps, that there is the greatest sanity and balm to be had from "Hearts and Minds." The film takes a far kindlier and longer-sighted view of the capacity of the American national character to receive and absorb tormenting new information about itself than most citizens now do in this shaken, guilt-freighted land of the fortunate.

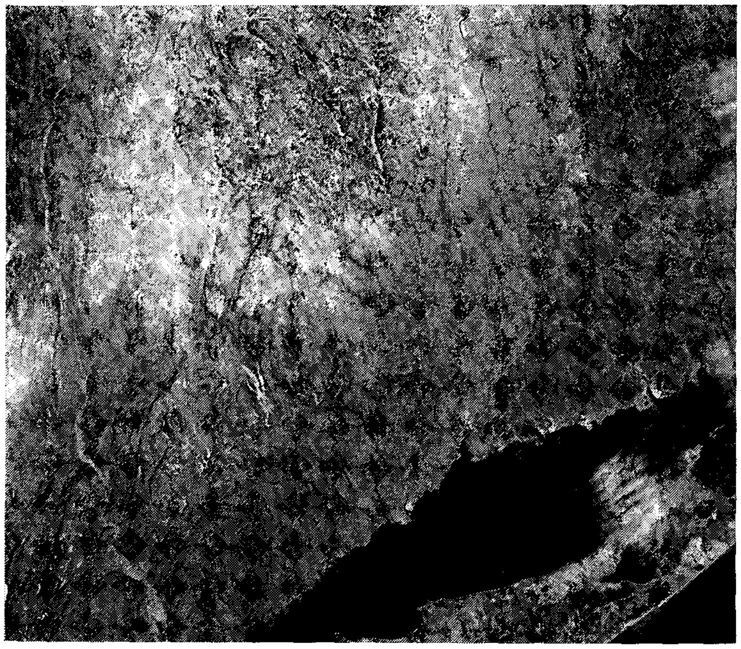


PHILIPPE DE BROCA's newest film to be seen here, "Touch and Go," is not the best vehicle for his monkey-on-a-stick funniness. He moves more easily through quixotic vaudeville pranks like "The Love Game," the mischievous sex comedy that came ou here in 1960. Like all true comic characters, the three principals of "The Love Game" were embalmed in obsession: the husband figure (unmarried) was a sprightly faun absorbed in the painting of trompe-l'oeil roses; the lover was a hopelessly square real-estate agent lost in the rituals of bachelordom; the girl was an endearingly calm pragmatist intent only on having a baby. For this trio of inseparables, happily marooned in crankiness, de Broca found the perfect setting. The action occurred in—or picked its way through—a cluttered Paris antique shop owned by the heroine. Never was funnier use made of loony furniture: one grew to know the witch balls and birdcages as if they were one's aunt's. De Broca makes fine, sweet-pitched films when he is treating this sort of idyllic self-absorption. The same tonic singularity of behavior allowed "The Five Day Lover" (1961), which was about infidelity, to seem a story without a wound. The hedonist characters maintained a quizzicality that was almost pre-moral in its link to the infant sense that nothing will go wrong. Both films were blessed by the performances of the young Jean-Pierre Cassel, his nose looking pointed enough to paint miniatures with, and his temperament readily embracing the inconsequentially odd. In "The Five Day Lover," the Cassel character was keen on country-dancing in clogs.

The unfortunate "The Devil by the Tail" (1969) was a crime comedy that teetered over the line between convincing quirkiness and preciosity. The earlier "King of Hearts" (1967) had the same flaw, yet it has proved to be a commercial stayer, especially with college audiences. Its story, set near the end of the First World War, was about a Scottish soldier ordered to dismantle a bomb in a French village that had been deserted except by the inhabitants of a lunatic asylum and of a zoo. The soldier was played by Alan Bates, who was then identified as one of the most electric listeners in the English-speaking cinema or theatre—he has since proved himself to be a wonderful histrionic actor (as in "Butley")—but even his gift for raptness could make nothing much of a role that asked him to be the confidant of carrier pigeons. The film veered from the genuinely dream-struck to the winsome. Between interludes of reverie that seemed carnival respites from caution and mortality, the fanciful gags won overemphatic laughter from audiences, who sounded secretly scared that de Broca's grip on his sense of humor was slipping. I think it was Shaw who once wrote, with a glare, that a professional observer like him "soon gets cured of the public's delusion that everything that makes it laugh amuses it."

In "Touch and Go" ("La Poudre d'Escampette" in French, meaning "bolting;" made in 1971 but only just released here), de Broca takes on the Second World War and a serious theme about friendship. The trouble, again, is that he can't adapt the old style. It is de Broca's habit to blow dandelion clocks. In the soft breeze of his earlier pictures, that was beguiling, but in the middle of bullets it seems a caprice. His breakneck steeplechase through the hazards of an antique shop was funny; a matching sequence for a biplane in "Touch and Go" isn't. In the course of a war story like this, there is nothing but a wince to be won from a scene in which two men in danger of their lives are bumped across a large acreage of the North African desert in a plane that a pretty but unhinged woman pilots with at least one wheel permanently on the ground, as though she were adhering to the old-time tenet of movie censorship which ruled that in all double-bed scenes at least one of the characters must have at least one foot on the floor.

At the start of the film, with Michel Piccoli playing a gunrunner who comes home to North Africa, things seem to be in hand. Piccoli is his usual accomplished self. He is one of the many battered-looking and sagacious European character actors who make it seem inviting to outgrow being unwrinkled. The trouble with the film begins when we meet Michael York as a soppy English officer, accompanied by other soppy English officers, playing cards and boozing in a plane over Libya. The overdrawn Bertie Woosters very, very slowly realize, by putting two and two together about the gunfire surrounding them and the wild bucketing of the plane, that something's up with the pilot. Dead, they twig. Michael York has luckily taken a few lessons flying a glider. But into the drink the plane goes. The York character escapes somehow—you never see exactly how, just as you never see whether he tries to save his fellow-officers. Anyway, here he is again, blithely hanging on to a dinghy in the sea, though with dry



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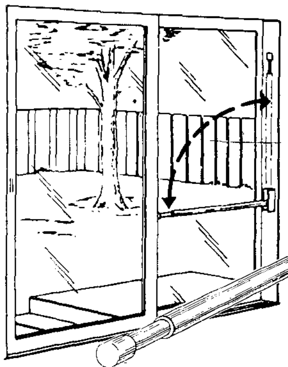

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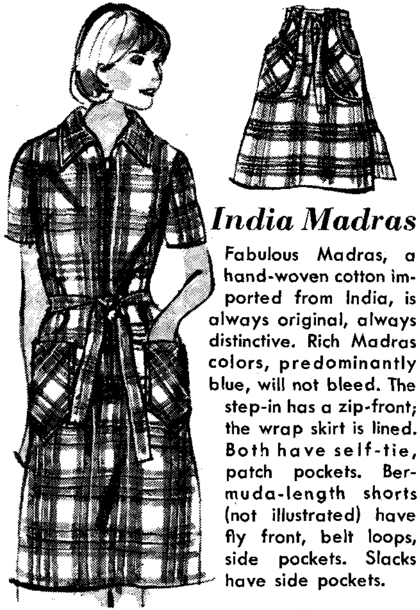

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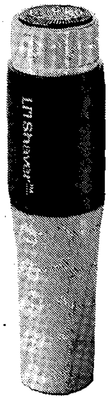

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patches on his uniform, and even wearing his hat. Piccoli, on the bridge of an attached big boat, is about to turn away from the sight of the crash when he hears a politely elocuted "Help! Help!" Michael York is taken on board and quickly changes into some spotlessly white boxer shorts that couldn't conceivably have belonged to any of the ragged rogues who are the crew. He fries himself some eggs, and tells the friendly gunrunner "*Passez le* salt," or something of the sort. There is a lot of forced fun about the French-speaking abilities of fictional English upper-class nits. Michael York says "*Il faut* bluffer" at some point later on.

The plot is extremely long, trivial, complicated, and dependent on our accepting the notion that the characters have brains the size of peas. The tone is finally lost when the Piccoli character shoots someone by accident. The scene comes after a slow-burn joke about the discovery by Italian soldiers of one of Michael York's clearly marked British Army-issue shoes. That joke, which is an amiable but overmilked one about Italians' being reluctant military heroes, would more aptly belong in farce, where stereotypes are acceptable in place of characters. And then the structure is knocked sideways by the shooting incident, and so is the whole of the rest of the picture. A killed man is not a stereotype. He represents tragedy, calamity, the extinction of a personality. Anonymous, the corpse suddenly commands the film, and the film slinks away.

This is not to say that it is impossible—simply aesthetically difficult—to make farces that include the sight of death in battle. Richard Lester did it in "How I Won the War" and in both "The Three Musketeers" and "The Four Musketeers." But a very grown-up and bitter rage seethes under the schoolboy funniness in Lester's films. In "How I Won the War," particularly, there was the stoicism that is known only to the immovably angry—to people who admit no one's right to blow their heads off. In "Touch and Go," de Broca has made his second farcical fantasy set in the middle of a war, but he is incapable—owing to docility of temperament, perhaps—of giving an audience the feeling that any dark imperatives lie behind the action. And, just as he can't absorb war into the mode he works in, he can't make this film the story of true friendship he obviously hoped it would be. Piccoli, York, and a Swiss consul's wife (Marlène Jobert) are supposed

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to be a trio of total strangers locked together in the intimacy uniquely produced by crisis. But the intimacy isn't made palpable. The three sense nothing about one another, they ask few questions of one another, they bring no past with them, and they carry no wish for a future together. In fact, they cut the future short in its prime, through allowing themselves to be fobbed off by an easy deception and by two acts of attitudinizing lone-wolf martyrdom; and all of that happens not because of their characters but for the puny sake of giving the film a tearful finale. This is no story of friendship. The three share nothing: not a sense of humor, not even a sense of danger. When they are on the run and in sight of safety, their resolve suddenly swerves into an elfin insistence on delaying their rescue by spending a fantasy Christmas Eve in an evacuated fort. They are relegated to existing simply as the instruments of gags and the outcomes of whimsey.

—PENELOPE GILLIATT

•

TO OUR NEW HAVEN LINE PASSENGERS:

The first part of this week was very trying for many of you. We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience you experienced.

On Tuesday morning, some trains were delayed due to equipment and cold weather problems at the Stamford storage yard. Additional delays were caused by signal problems which blocked one of the four tracks on the Park Avenue Viaduct.

On Tuesday evening at 5:26 P.M., the Power Supervisor at the Cos Cob power plant reported an electrical ground in the Mount Vernon area on the overhead wires. At 5:42 P.M. the Mount Vernon Fire Department requested us to turn off the power because a cable was burning near the 5th Avenue bridge. Power could not be turned on again until 6:45 P.M. In the intervening period seven trains were stalled between Woodlawn and New Rochelle. Another six New Haven trains were held on the Harlem Line south of Woodlawn. Trains which had not already left Grand Central were held in the Terminal. While the power was off, the lights and heat on three of the older electric trains depleted their batteries. As a result these trains had to be assisted with emergency locomotives.

The electrical ground was caused by brine (water saturated with salt) dripping from the street bridge over our tracks and power lines. The dripping brine came in contact with the catenary system burning a span wire in half.

Again to all, our sincere apologies. We shall continue to exert all of our efforts to reduce delays and your inconvenience.

—*Letter distributed to passengers on the New Haven.*

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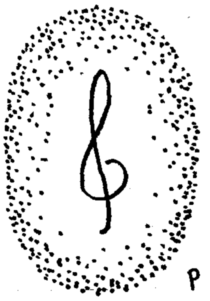
MUSICAL EVENTS

King of Instruments

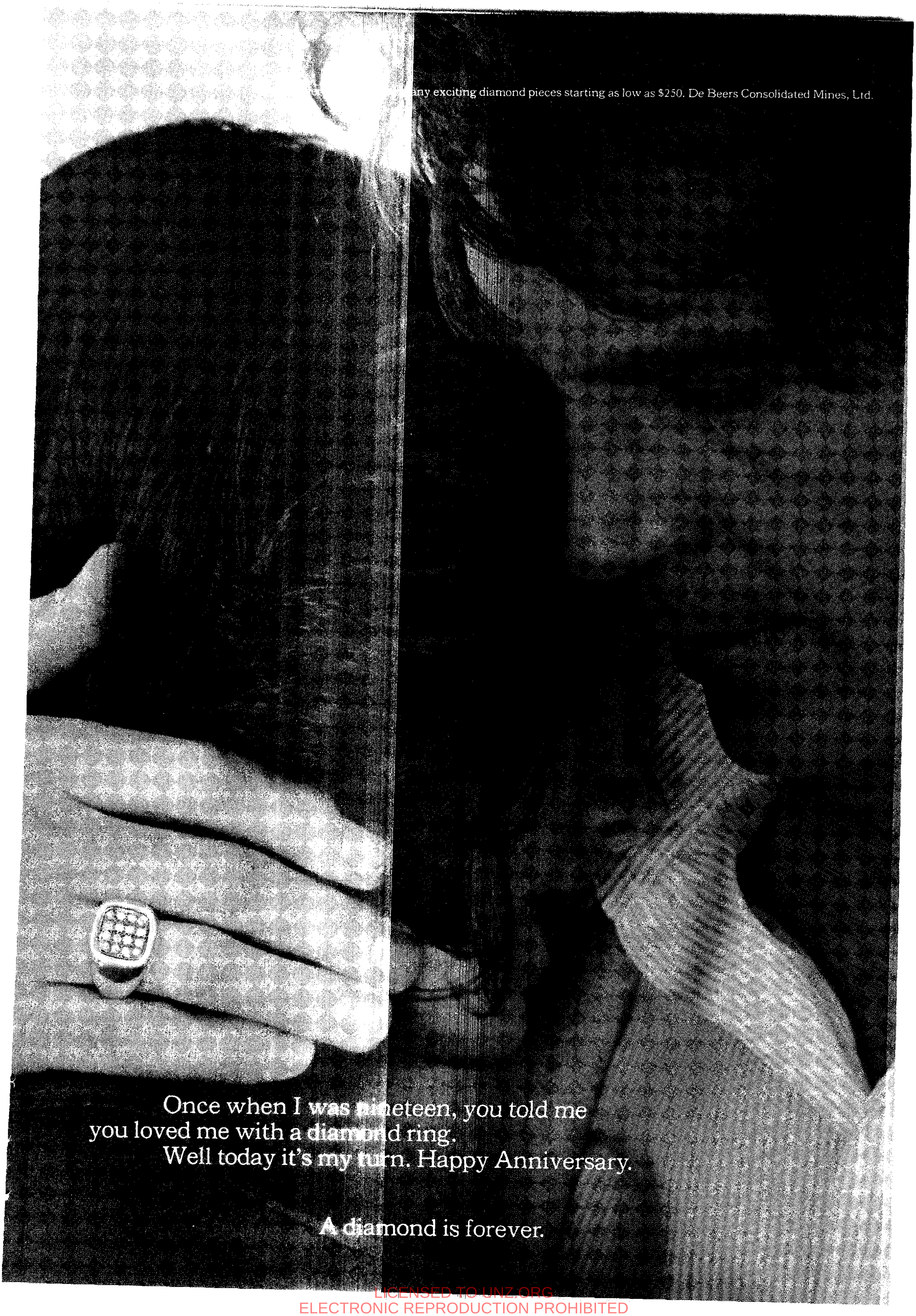
ORGANISTS—I speak from experience, having spent undergraduate years as organ scholar of my college, and some later years editing a magazine that was, among other things, the monthly "organ" of the Royal College of Organists—tend to be a rum breed, with passions and prejudices distinct from those of ordinary musicians. The audiences for organ recitals are also rather special. In New York, there are several series of recitals that cater for them but receive little general publicity. One day, I hope to make the rounds of the more celebrated instruments, and report. But today, just a preliminary account of an important instrument that is at the center of the city's musical life—the organ given to Lincoln Center by Miss Alice Tully, which stands in the hall that bears her name. It has been inaugurated by a series of four concerts: two solo recitals, given by André Marchal and Karl Richter, and two orchestral programs featuring works in which the organ has a large role. The account can be but tentative, for Mr. Marchal is a veteran (he won the Guilmant Prize at the Paris Conservatoire in 1913) who commands our affection and respect but no longer commands the techniques that once were his, while Mr. Richter's registration, in his all-Bach program, too often presented the instrument as a box of painfully shrill, strident whistles. There were stretches of noisily insistent, even brutal, playing of the kind that gets organists and their followers a bad name among lay musicians. Who but a tin-eared organ fancier, they ask, can bear to listen to elaborate contrapuntal textures sounded in consecutive fifths—the result of drawing stops that make the first and second harmonics of a note nearly as prominent as the fundamental tone? Let us suppose that Mr. Richter did not have time to study the sound of the organ in the hall—and postpone consideration of its merits as a solo instrument until it has been heard to better advantage.



The hall must have caused problems. The commission was for a pretty big and versatile organ, such as might be built for an abbey or large church (it is a four-manual job, with sixty-one stops), and so in Tully Hall everything had to be scaled down if listeners were not to be blown out of their seats by the Trompettes and Clairons in full cry, or the *Grand Jeu.* Moreover, what was planned was the kind of instrument that is generally to be found in resonant buildings, where space and echo take the edge off the sound and are "mellering to the organ," while the maker holds things in balance and maintains distinctness by devising stops with a clean attack and well-defined timbres. Tully Hall is unresonant. Pipework that in a reverberant church might sound admirably clear would there sound clinically precise. So everything had to be newly thought, if music written by Couperin, Bach, César Franck, and Olivier Messiaen was to make the kind of effect that the composers had in mind. The initial "chiff" that marks the more extreme products of the baroque revival has been avoided. On the whole, the problems seem to have been solved well. But the precision of the hall's acoustics created an odd effect in pedal solos, when the line hopped from one side of the platform to the other, from one to the other of the two flanking towers that contain the pedal pipes.

The organ was built by the firm of Theodore Kuhn, in Männedorf, Switzerland. (There are some older Kuhn organs in America, but this is the only modern example of the firm's work here.) "The tonal design was developed by Lawrence Phelps" (I quote Lincoln Center's official handout), and the stop-control and combination systems are by Lawrence Phelps & Associates, of Erie, Pennsylvania. (There is little chauvinism in the organ world; the new organ in Hexham Abbey, Northumberland, is a Phelps, shipped over from Erie—a two-manual tracker with thirty-four stops.) Voicing the instrument seems to have been the joint responsibility of Kurt Baumann, of the Kuhn company, and Mr. Phelps. The keyboard action is "tracker" (i.e., there is direct mechanical linkage between the keys and the valves that admit air to the corresponding pipes), but the stops are shifted by electricity. (They are controlled by little rocking tablets, not those hefty drawstops linked directly to sliders that bring the ranks of pipes into play.) A rough analogy from the motoring world might be an automobile that had rack-and-pinion steering, which gives one the precise feel of the road under one's fingers, but an electrically operated gearshift. The pedal board is concave and radiating, not straight. Wind is supplied by motors, at the touch of a switch. (My college organ, with its straight pedals, needed a pair of strong arms to pump it—a dependable system on days when the power supply was erratic.) Tracker action is once again in favor. It was standard in the days before Charles Barker introduced his Barker-Lever Action to the great French organ-builder Cavaillé-Coll (1837), and Henry Willis equipped the St. Paul's Cathedral with tubular pneumatic action (1872), and Robert Hope-Jones, later in the century, devised his delicate electric actions. Playing a big tracker needs strong fingers (as I discovered in Haarlem last summer). Applied willy-nilly, the tracker action can spoil instruments that were never meant to have it. (A fine, romantic Hill in Adelaide Town Hall became hard to play when the assistance provided by its Barker-Lever Action was withdrawn recently, in a misguided attempt at "barockification.") Fashions in the organ world change fast, and the postwar "back to baroque" movement has already been succeeded, or at least joined, by another: to save, unaltered, the noblest organs of Victorian and Edwardian times, the threatened Willises and Hills and early Walkers, the Hope-Joneses, Skinners, Austins, Aeolians, and Casavants. (What has happened to their giant successors? Is the monster in the Atlantic City Auditorium, with its seven-manual console and its stops on a hundred-inch wind pressure, still the largest organ in the world, and what shape is it in? Does the six-manual organ in the Wanamaker store in Philadelphia still sound? Any active organ enthusiast can answer these questions. I am drawing on schoolboy memories of the American marvels I once read of, and have not yet begun to explore.)

THE Tully Hall organ represents a return to eighteenth-century sound ideals and to crisp eighteenth-century touch, combined with every modern convenience for the player. It has sixty-four combination pistons (buttons, set below the keyboards, that automatically bring on any chosen combination of stops)—eight for each of the four manuals, eight for the pedals, and twenty-four more affecting the whole organ. Twenty of this array are duplicated by toe pistons (for use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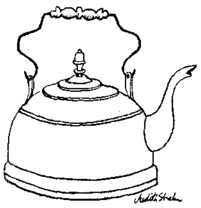
when the hands are busy but a foot is unoccupied). In addition, further pistons can bring on or silence the mixtures, the reeds, the *Plein Jeu*, the *Grand Jeu*, and "Tutti." All this is temptation for the player. When changing the stops of an organ requires physical effort, and hands must be lifted from the keyboard to push them in or pull them out, there is less provocation to indulge in fidgety, unstylish shifts of registration. (Similarly, when manpower provides the wind pressure, the player is less likely to use the organ at full force for long periods.) But the temptation can be resisted. The gadgetry is not needed for Bach, but it will be useful in the modern repertory, which the instrument is also designed to serve.

There is always a danger that a versatile instrument may prove to have no distinctive character of its own. The Tully organ was put through such protean paces during the inaugural concerts that it has been hard to form more than a generally favorable but unparticularized opinion. The organ is said to combine French, German, and Italian characteristics (in proper Swiss fashion). So far, it seems to me more classical French than anything else. The Great (or *Grand Orgue;* the organ is titled in French) chorus is founded not on any noble Anglo-Saxon Diapason but on an unassertive, even somewhat featureless, Montre that takes fire and color from the ranks of pipes, sounding upper harmonics, that can be added to it. The Swell (or *Récit*) has a good array of full, sweet flutes, and a silvery *Plein Jeu.* The Choir (or *Positif*) has a lively chorus with a character nicely distinct from the Great's. The fourth keyboard controls a *Positif de Chambre*, a little chamber organ planned especially for continuo use, which can also be played from the Choir manual. What is apparent at once is how good the instrument looks. The auditorium, which was architecturally a shade dull while the tall wooden ribs ran unbroken all around it, has now received its focus. The *Werkprinzip* scheme of construction, musically, mechanically, and aesthetically sound, has been followed; that is to say, each of the organ's five departments is defined by its case. Directly over the player's head is the little *Positif de Chambre*, in a box whose doors can be opened and shut by a pedal. Above that, the gleaming *Grand Orgue.* Above that, projecting in a case of its own, the *Positif.* The tall *Pédale* towers close the scheme on either side. The *Récit* is in mysterious darkness, behind the louvres of the box that encloses it. The visual design is by Jakob Schmidt, of Lucerne; and even when the organ is not being played its appearance will enhance any recital given on the platform below it.



THE first orchestral concert, by the Juilliard Orchestra conducted by Sixten Ehrling, brought Hindemith's Organ Concerto, a rather dry, schematic late work, composed for the new Aeolian-Skinner instrument in Philharmonic (now Avery Fisher) Hall, in 1963. Organ and orchestra did not sound good together (in anything but gentle music they seldom do), but the fault is the composer's. In Saint-Saëns's Third Symphony, "for orchestra with organ," the organ is used for much of the time as a quiet, sweet continuo, and John Schuder, the organist, made it sound very beautiful. He is a sensitive player. How often, at the end of this symphony, or of Elgar's "Enigma Variations," and his "Cockaigne" Overture, the listener quails before rude blasts from an organ that overpowers the orchestra! But Mr. Schuder did not confuse majesty with bombast; organ and orchestra were in balance, and the C-major of this life rang out grandly, not grossly.

Three organists appeared at the second orchestral concert, given by the Musica Aeterna Orchestra, conducted by Frederic Waldman. E. Power Biggs (whose name, according to the program note, "is literally synonymous . . . with the instrument he plays") was the soloist in the Sinfonia to Bach's Cantata No. 29, "Wir Danken Dir," and Haydn's Second Organ Concerto in C. Fortunately, his playing was neither powerful nor big. It was slight and unassuming. But he did show that the new instrument could provide bright, pretty, delicately dancing sounds, much like those still to be heard in the Bergkirche in Eisenstadt, where Haydn played. A pity, though, that Mr. Biggs did not also provide a continuo part (this was supplied by a harpsichord). Catharine Crozier was the organist in Samuel Barber's "Toccata Festiva," composed for the inauguration of the new organ in the Philadelphia Academy of Music, in 1960. Her playing was brilliant. The Toccata was done without the "percussion crashes and bursts of brass" and "slashing scales and triad figures of brilliant . . . woodwinds" mentioned in the program note;

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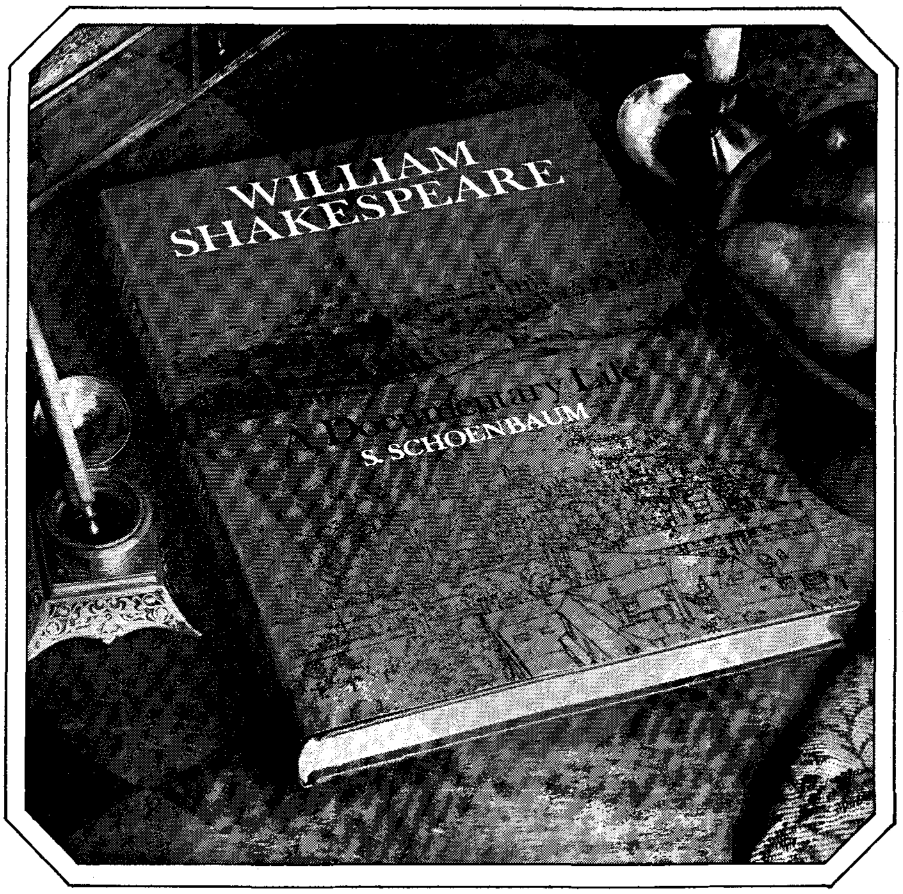

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a version for string orchestra, with trumpet, was used. This is a more acceptabl and more pleasing combination of forc than full orchestra and full organ i competition or conjunction. Poulen used something similar in his Concert for Organ, String Orchestra, an Timpani. Thomas Schippers was th trim soloist in this dapper, beguilin little composition.

THE organ repertory is large, an not all of it is only for organ fanciers. Other cities have found that th general public welcomes a well planned, coherent series of short orga recitals—an hour of the instrument i enough for most people—which ca conveniently be given between, say, si and seven. The hall is then freed for th main concert of the evening, and the audience can go on to its theatres, concerts or dinners. I hope that Lincoln Cente will consider such a series, based in Tully Hall but perhaps moving into Fishe Hall for programs to which the Aeolian-Skinner is better suited. (In fact, ther are now organs by three notable builder under the roof of the Juilliard School: the new Kuhn-Phelps in Tully Hall, a forty-four-rank Holtkamp in Paul Hall, and a Flentrop in the Organ Studio. Paul Hall seats only two hundred and seventy-eight, and is in regular student use, but perhaps, if timetables allow, it could also be brought into the series. The Organ Studio can seat only fifty or so.) The Philharmonic's thematic program planning—when, say, Mendelssohn, Brahms, Liszt, or Schoenberg is the chosen composer—could be amplified by reference to these recitals. The players are at hand, for they have to participate in the various recital series of the city's churches. And so—to judge by the house-full sign that went up for the inaugural concerts—is the audience.

—ANDREW PORTER

•

Harry W. Horton, 18, of 87 Grove St., was charged with illegally carrying a motorcycle and operating a motorcycle with a proper license at 2:50 a.m. Saturday. He is scheduled to appear in Common Pleas Court April 14.—*Stamford (Conn.) Advocate.*

He had a proper license, but he couldn't get it out of his pocket.

•

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BOOKS

Bookmen

"FLOWER of cities all," said the medieval poet; "fathomless inland sea," wrote the modern, suggesting the humming deeps, the shadowy pools, the surge and quick lights of London. The place has changed, naturally. What the bombs had spared or gouged out for renewal, in the City's heart and by the Thames, the rank energies of greed, the vengeance against comeliness which seems to inspire a declining capitalism, have vandalized, bricked up, or left raw. The sometime vision of sight lines open to St. Paul's, in memory of the fires withstood, in the hope of still spaces amid the drumming tide of traffic, has been sacrificed to the profit of the property men. Regency terraces, conceived to trap and educate the eye in a delicate curvature, have been levelled and concrete verticals thrust in their place. The skyline is closing in with peremptory towers, masking the greens, the leafy commons, the garden squares that from Soho to Belgravia, from Richmond to Epping, had set privacies and the anarchic content of children, primulas, starched nannies, dogs, vague statuary among the earth's most crowded acres. The smothered gold of Georgian fronts is flaking. Victoriana is being broken with particular animus. The night streets, embankments, covered passages are no longer as safe as they were (though reassuring in comparison with other cities). A biting dust blows from leaves and railings. The Ritz Grill has closed.

And yet, such is the mass of London, such the cunning of its recesses—"crescent," "culvert," "turnstile," "close," "garden court," so many designations expressive of covertness—that much survives. There are fragments of Southwark almost Elizabethan. Go down Birdcage Walk on a calm morning and the vistas are eighteenth-century. There are Victorian alleys, façades, gray and rust-colored fretworks of roofs and chimney pots within a short walk of St. Pancras. Limehouse and Blackheath have their Edwardian, fin-de-siècle spots. Coleridge's Highgate, Keats's Hampstead are besieged by development, the jets and the hammering of road traffic shake loose the tiles, but neither is quite submerged. Two particular Londons are recapturable, having on them the impress of the two writers who more than any others made the city their own and rendered their vision of the place active, material in the mind's eye. Let the fog slide in from the Kentish marshes, let the brown of winter seep through Chancery Lane, and London, for all its current shoddiness, its novel haste and rancorous note, is Dickens's still. Stand in Gough Square, find one of the old alleys off Fleet Street, walk the precincts of Westminster, stopping to test the cobbles in Dean's Yard, idle at the bookstalls in Charing Cross, and you are in the London of Samuel Johnson, to tire of which, he professed, was to tire of life itself.

As John Wain shows in his "Samuel Johnson: A Biography" (Viking, and a Book-of-the-Month Club selection), this is literally so. Johnson's neighborhood, around Gough Square, can be seen today. The great lexicographer lies buried in Westminster Abbey, beside his friend David Garrick, in the heart of a city of spires and squares, of chophouses and clubs, many of which he would recognize. But the concordance is not only external. It resides in the savor of London life, in the interplay of politics and of literature, in the dominance of rhetoric and masculinity that have shaped English ways. Johnson is the archetypal clubman and man of letters. The tactics of bullying common sense, which inform both the virtues and the weaknesses of English literary-political discourse and debate to this day, bear Johnson's mark. The moral criteria, the ideals of robust civility, the peculiar congruence of élitist and popular values that he brought to bear on his judgment of books and of men, of poetry and of party, have generated a basic tradition in the enterprise of literature.

That literature *is* an enterprise was Dr. Johnson's cardinal insight. It was he who under stress of genius and necessity worked out the conventions of survival for the modern writer, critic, publicist, literary journalist, political columnist. In place of ecclesiastical or aristocratic patronage, of academic seclusion or sheer brutal makeshift, Johnson did more than any other practitioner of letters to establish professionalism. The public network of periodical writing, of editorial work, of books done on commission or against advances, by which men of letters continue to persist and sometimes to flourish, notably in the teeming literary-political cockpit of London, is Johnson's true legacy. To loiter on Fleet Street as the early editions come off the press, to thumb, in the worn glories of one's club, the weeklies of literature and opinion, to be a bookman among bookmen, is to touch on Johnson's own career at its vital nodes. There is plenty of disillusion, of mendacity, left on

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Grub Street. But the man who, in his "Dictionary," defined a "patron" as "commonly a wretch who supports with insolence, and is paid with flattery," had won for the "scribblers' tribe" the freedom of the city.

John Wain is a man of letters through and through: poet, novelist, editor, essayist, reviewer, biographer, lecturer. His current term as Professor of Poetry gives him just that marginal—at once bohemian and pontifical—link with Oxford which Johnson, too destitute to complete his studies, had longed for. Wain's intimation of descent from Johnson's kind of craft, his sense of the courage and volcanic energies that sustain a free-lance posture, are keen. But his claims for Samuel Johnson are larger. He finds in him a personal presence of compelling dimension, an exponent of attitudes that have not lost their pertinence, and a major writer. Today, Johnson's poetry and moral essays are almost exclusively of the domain of the specialist. Wain rightly emphasizes not only their intrinsic quality—a Latinate incisiveness and mastery over plain speech whose eloquence has induced such modern poets as Robert Lowell to direct imitation—but the formidable role that "The Vanity of Human Wishes" and *The Rambler* have played in the history of British, indeed of Anglo-American, style. He is illuminating on Johnson's moral fable, "Rasselas," and convincing when he argues for the "marvellous ripeness," for the genius of companionship, so subtly blended with critical exaction, in the "Lives of the Poets":

> I have been reading the "Lives of the Poets" for thirty years, and can testify that in all that time I have never known the day or the hour when I failed to find interest, instruction, amusement, somewhere in their pages. Armed with the two modest volumes . . . the longest railway journey, the dreariest wet evening in a country hotel, have no terrors.

Wain is entirely right when he speaks of the "Dictionary" as having determined much of the ground of political and literary definition, of shared reference and exemplification, in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England. He could have added America. It was the Authorized Version, Blackstone's "Commentaries," and Johnson's lexicon that largely formed the bases of American public speech. If Becky Sharp, at the scandalous inception of "Vanity Fair," tosses Johnson's sovereign work out of the carriage window, Daniel Webster and Abraham Lincoln were there to pick it up. "I now begin to see land," wrote Johns toward the close of his mountaino labors, "after having wandered . . . i this vast sea of words." He had do more than "wander." He had mappe our tongue and given it contours th remain familiar.

As Wain is the first to admit, this not a biography stemming from fres or unexploited sources. It follows ve closely on generations of Johnsonian and on the Boswell industry. Schola have pointed to serious blemishes i Mr. Wain's handling of detail. Transcriptions are not always to b trusted. The account of th methods and chronology o Johnson's lexicographic worl and editorship of Shakespeare i not wholly accurate. Mr. Wai will allow himself more than the occasional banality: when an intimate relationship ends, the memory of mutua shortcomings remains "like the thorn in a bunch of roses;" "the Unite States Cavalry was just over the nex hill, in the shape of a posse of booksellers." The book as a whole, moreover, is lopsided. Johnson's early years are chronicled in loving and perceptive detail. The latter portions of his life speed by. (Is Boswell's bulk inevitably in the way of anyone's writing about Dr. Johnson's mannerisms, psychological torments, sexual frustrations, and verbal bouts during the decades of his notoriety and decline?) Key relations, such as that to Swift, are only glanced at, and Johnson's place, simultaneously pivotal and idiosyncratic, in the history of religious feeling, in the development of potentially neurotic inwardness, is dealt with rather superficially.

But these caveats do not lessen the book's genuine merits: its sheer readability, the author's pride and delight in his subject, his acute touch for the graphic oddity (noting that Johnson's father was fined twopence for a muck heap in Bakers Lane, Wain adds that Shakespeare's father suffered precisely the same doom—a detail that dramatizes the continuities of life between sixteenth-century Stratford and eighteenth-century Lichfield). This alertness to continuity is the psychological mainspring of the work. Good biographers nearly always identify with substantial traits in their subject. In John Wain's case, this reciprocity has a special political-cultural edge. Young Johnson's erudition owed a good deal to sound whipping. "Certainly," adds his biographer, "the disappearance of Latin and Greek from English schools has exactly kept pace with the obsolescence of the cane." Modern "cheesemongers" should not hide behind Johnson's famous dictum that "No man but a blockhead ever wrote except for money," for to write for money in those fine and ancient days "could mean doing things like translating Crousaz on Pope." Robert Browning educated himself for creation by reading Johnson's "Dictionary" from beginning to end: "If modern young poets would do the same, we should have to endure far less shoddy thinking and approximate writing." Johnson knew, he experienced, the blackness of sexual "abnormality," but he faced down the pathological currents in himself with pious will. How instructive a contrast with us who live "in the hungover state of Western culture."

The question is not whether Mr. Wain's reflexes on these several matters are right (I daresay they are). It is their consistency that counts, and the empathy they give to his reanimation of Dr. Johnson. What we have before us is more than a literary biography. It is a nostalgic brief, critical but nevertheless poignant, for a condition of being and of sensibility now largely extinct. Wain was, not so very long ago, one of the famous rout of angry, or at least acerbic, young men, blowing hard at the old cobwebs and ironizing their way to success. Yet, like others of his generation, he has turned increasingly toward a kind of Fabian pastoralism. The privacies, the somewhat haughty nonchalance, the oratorical, classically grounded stylishness of the English establishment, those delicate balances of rural and urban that govern both the inner and the exterior landscape of British institutions, the meshing of urbane latitude with stately form which for so long made up the spirit of Anglicanism—all these now strike Mr. Wain as eminently worth conserving. The alternatives are shoddy and often cruel. One looks back not in anger but in dispassionate longing. In Samuel Johnson such an attitude has a talismanic source and continued authority. At its best, Wain's study captures the flavor of bitterness and hoarding vision, of memoration and defiance, which one experiences walking through London's lanes and garden closes in the morning light, before the bulldozers arrive.

—George Steiner

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The Maze, by Eileen Simpson (Simon & Schuster). An engaging, clear-eyed portrait—"study" might be a more appropriate term—of a

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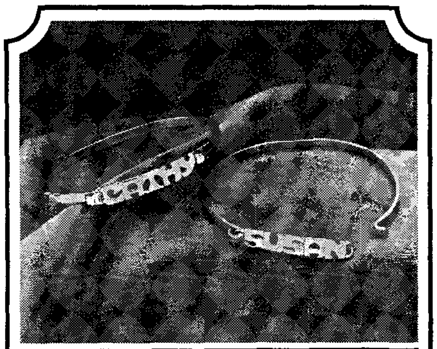

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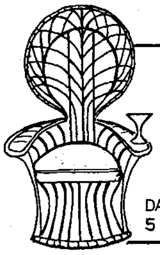

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difficult, brilliant poet and his kindly, much-put-upon wife, which never really expands enough to make you think of it as a work of fiction. Ben Bold, the book's talented, quixotic, dazzling, neurasthenic, impossible, soon-to-be-famous central figure, so dominates the landscape that the rest of the cast is barely visible. When Bold is around, the book lives; when he isn't, it dies. This is a problem not only for his wife, Rosy, who knows that he is ruining her life but loves him and is a little bored by mere mortals, but also for the reader. The author has a sharp eye for the complexity of people's emotional lives and an obviously well-digested knowledge of the sort of man and situation she is writing about. (She is a professional psychologist and was married to the poet John Berryman.) But the sluggish narrative, the empty chitchat of most of the other characters, and the rather guidebook-like descriptive passages (the book is mostly set in Rome) too often make the book seem like a case history (albeit a very personal one) to which a novel has been appended.

THE GAUDY, by J. I. M. Stewart (Norton). Mr. Stewart is a storyteller of rare wit and urbanity, and he keeps us entertained even when we suspect that he hasn't much to say or is being high-handed with his coincidences. Here he captures twenty-four hours of an Oxford gaudy (an affair similar to an American reunion) and renders the sentimental musings and canny deductions of an old grad, now a successful playwright, named Duncan Pattullo, as he catches up on news of out-of-touch chums, aging dons, worrisome sons and daughters, and demure (or not so demure) wives. It is a crowded tableau: on and on come the characters, each one bearing the germ of a story—a jam that has to be cleared up, an opportunity that waits to be taken, a delectable stirring of romance—until, with the dizzying profusion of budding actions, we realize that Mr. Stewart is playing a game with us. The name of an ever-helpful college servant—Plot—is a clue. In fact, new characters are introduced almost to the very end, and the novel abruptly concludes with any number of incipient stories but scarcely one that can be called complete. It is a blatant unfulfillment, but not a vexing one, for Mr. Stewart has amused us all the way. In the process, he

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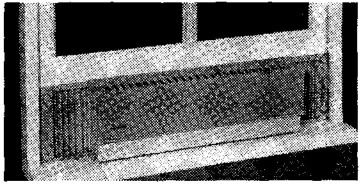

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has created a portrait of a privileged milieu which, though it will strike some readers as too flattering, is nonetheless a skillful accomplishment.

JULIA AND THE BAZOOKA, by Anna Kavan (Knopf). Fifteen powerful, pure, anguished short stories by an extraordinary English writer who died in 1968 at the age of sixty-seven. Anna Kavan's life, which is plainly mirrored in these stories, was one of almost unmitigated loneliness and despair. There were lengthy sojourns in mental institutions, several suicide attempts, and, for the last thirty years, an addiction to heroin, which she believed (and her doctors seem to have agreed with her) she required to keep going at all. None of these stories searches for any redemptive truths about the human spirit. All are bleak, angry records of a vision of life as a dangerous trap and the world as a menacing place filled with grotesque, cruel, remote creatures. Miss Kavan was a writer of such imagination and such chillingly matter-of-fact, unself-pitying vigor, however, that her vision transcends itself. Whether she is writing about a woman recently released from a mental institution who finds the outside world as much of a prison as the one she's just left, or a humid, erotic fantasy about a leopard, or a premonition of her own death, these stories have a wildness and beauty that are completely original and deeply moving.

GENERAL

PERSONAL RECORD, 1920-72, by Gerald Brenan (Knopf). An absorbing book, based on the author's diaries. When it opens, Brenan, an English veteran of the First World War, has saved enough money to rent a farmhouse in Spain to read and think. Meditative remoteness, though, was not to be his destiny. His youth was dominated by his love for Dora Carrington, a painter, the wife of his best friend, partly a lesbian and wholly devoted to the homosexual Lytton Strachey. One such affair, plus the Spanish Civil War, which fell on him and Andalusia like a mud slide, seems enough for one life, but Brenan has much, much more to tell. Other loves, marriage, friendships with artists and thinkers—Virginia Woolf, Ernest Hemingway, Bertrand Russell. The author's life was by no means what his elders—his domineering, rich father, his religious, submissive moth-

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er, and his generous, dotty great-aunt—would have wished, and one appreciates that he, and many of his generation, struggling out from under powerful, self-assured Victorian parents, fought harder wars than history records.

The Sealed Train, by Michael Pearson (Putnam). In 1917, in a period of thirty-four weeks, Nikolai Lenin progressed from a poor and obscure radical journalist in Zurich to absolute ruler of all Russia—one of the marvels of history. Historians agree that the Germans, by providing transport across Europe for Lenin and his party of revolutionaries—the famous sealed train—made much of this possible; the Germans, quite naturally, hoped that the Bolsheviks would take Russia out of the war. What has not been so clear is the source of the huge amounts of money the Bolsheviks had to spend to smother Russia with their propaganda. The suspicion has always been that it was German money, and Mr. Pearson now claims to have proof of this. He also furnishes new information on two shady characters (both of whom could have fitted nicely into an Eric Ambler novel) who acted as go-betweens in Lenin's dealing with the German Foreign Office. The book retraces the whole story of the Bolshevik seizure of power; it is skillfully written and has a certain fatalistic objectivity.

Florence Nightingale, by Elspeth Huxley (Putnam). An illustrated biography of the deservedly sainted reformer of the Victorian death-trap hospital and founder of the modern profession of scientific nursing. Her story, though familiar, is perennially fascinating. This telling is distinguished not only by Mrs. Huxley's admirable writing but also by her constant understanding that her heroine's achievement was a lifelong triumph over mile-high obstacles—her family's determination to make her "normal" and get her married, their well-bred horror at her interest in the sick and helpless, and a medical and military establishment so set in its archaic ways that any suggestion (even that illiterate convalescent soldiers be taught to read) aroused a thunderous opposition. The scenes that Mrs. Huxley draws of the Crimean War—in which, of course, Miss Nightingale first put her vocation to the test—are particularly grim: a mortality rate of more than seventy-five per cent, largely from even then preventable diseases; an indolent bureaucracy that let vital stores rot in the absence of a properly punctuated order; a high command that repeatedly whitewashed itself and instead of punishing its failures gave them honors and promotions. The pictures—more than a hundred of them, many in color—are particularly well chosen. Fifteen dollars.

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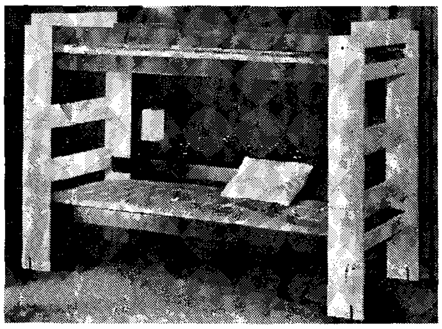

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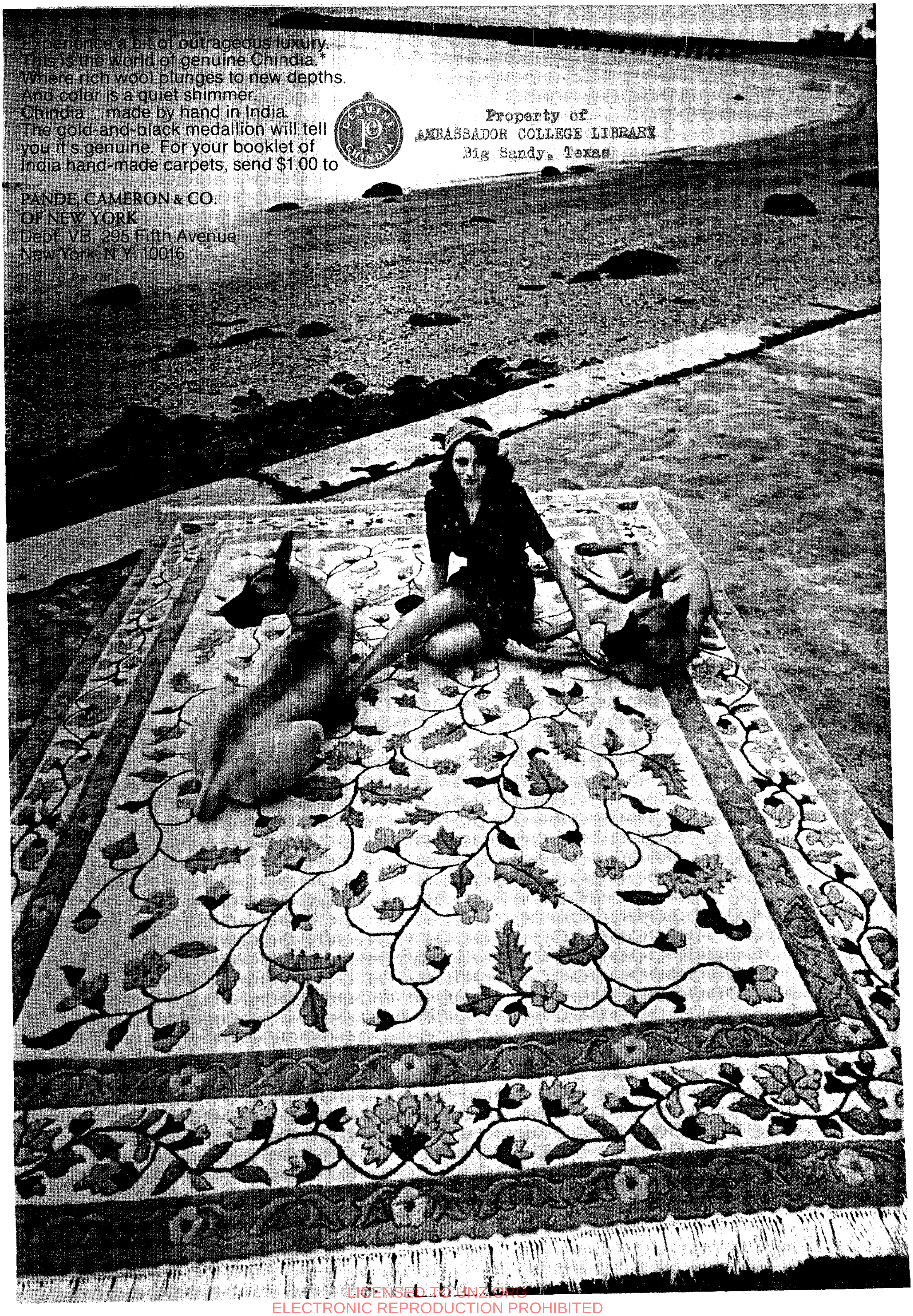

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